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# REPLACING THE HANDSHAKE WITH AUTOMATED RULES

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DBA

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# Replacing the Handshake with Automated Rules

An exploration of the effects of multi-role performativity during organizational  
change on the change agent

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## **Abstract**

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### **Replacing the Handshake with Automated Rules**

An exploration of the effects of multi-role performativity during organizational change on the change agent

Keywords: Actor Network Theory, Auto/ethnography, Change Agent, Role Performativity, Organizational Change

This is an auto/ethnographic account of one organization and one person as we concurrently moved thru a process of IT driven planned organizational change. *The purpose of the study is to explain how the change agent is affected by the experience of leading change.* Using actor-network theory and a polyphonic approach, I present a multi-voiced, multi-actor account of the social network in situ and trace how the various actors engaged with one another during the organizational change process. I reflect upon my own multi-role performativity when acting in the role of the internal change agent next to my daily job roles and explore the effects on both me and the network; which identifies that a new actor network has been created. Finally, a multi-voiced exploration of myself is presented which traces my evolution from researcher to auto/ethnographer, further demonstrating the effects of multi-role performativity on the human actor. The study demonstrates that the effects of organizational change on both the social network and the actors within the network cannot be foreseen. Furthermore, in combining the use of Actor Network Theory and auto-ethnography, the study provides new insights into the effects of performance on the human actor within a socio-technical network, which is an unexplored dimension within the field of organizational change.

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## Opening Preface

*I do not want to write this... I do not want to write about it, think about or talk about it. I fear that if I do, all of my composure will fly out of the window and I will be reduced to a puddle here on the floor. It was awful, the experience and it was my life for more than a year. Daily, each day, every day, going back there to be subjected to the same abuse, anger, frustration and betrayal. To them, the gang of double faced managers, who smiled into my face and then stabbed me in the back. No, I do not want to write about this, talk about it or think about it. I want to forget that year, those years, when each day became an exercise in survival, putting on a brave face, and marching through the motions, day after day, hour after hour, minute after minute. (Reflective Journal, December 2012)*

On the first of November 2009, I embarked upon a professional journey which would result in this piece of academic work. At the time I was unaware of the impact the years I would spend in the organization would have on me as professional, individual and researcher. It is only now, several years later, reflecting back upon the experience that has been, that I am able to recognize the significance of my experiences.

*What is it that I am so in fear of, what is it that I have locked away deep in my heart of hearts, that which I am desperately trying to forget. It is an IT implementation, something that actually gave me a name in the company, got me recognized, got me known and earned me praise. Then why is it that the mere idea of it brings a lump to my throat, a tremble to my lips and makes my eyes prick with unshed tears. It was how my peers, colleagues, "friends" responded to me and the task which I had been given. Their behavior, or the change in their behavior when I was performing the role of implementer, was such that I lost trust in the people with whom I spent 38 hours of each week. I no longer trusted them, believed them or was one of them. My workplace became my gulag, where I went each day out of requirement, obligation, necessity; a place where my goal was to survive each hour until I could leave and return home. (Reflective Journal, December 201*

## Chapter 1 Introduction

### Introduction

In this chapter I will provide the background to the study and present the research question. In chapter 2 I review the existing literature about organizational change, internal change agents and performativity. This follows with chapter 3 where a description of the methodology and methods used to gather and analyze the data collected is found. Findings are presented in chapter 4 following the stages of the sociology of translation as defined by Callon (1986) in accordance with actor-network theory. In chapter 5 I discuss the consequences of the 3 roles I performed; peer, project manager, researcher on myself and the organization studied. The chapter concludes with an exploration of myself as the final object of research as I trace my evolution from researcher to auto/ethnographer. Chapter 6 concludes the thesis with a review of the previous chapters, and presents the conclusions of the study in the form of its contributions to theory and practice and implications for future research.

### Background of the Study

*From the outside it looked like any other company headquarters. A greyish white building with the company name emblazoned across the upper right corner, Aspen. I bicycled my way up to the security gates and maneuvered around the traffic barrier. It is my first day and reception is expecting me. I park my bicycle in the designated area and approach the entrance with trepidation, a new start, a new beginning, a new challenge. I swallow my nerves and ring the bell. The receptionist replies, in Dutch... oh yeah I think, there is another challenge, the language. In my best formal Dutch I reply with my name and purpose; a buzzer sounds indicating that I may enter. Across the threshold I step, leaving one stage of my professional life behind, crossing over to begin another. (Reflective Journal, December 2012)*

And so it began; my tenure at the EMEA<sup>1</sup> headquarters of an international company, Aspen<sup>2</sup>, that from the outside appeared so unassuming. However, behind that simple façade lay a deeply interwoven web of informal working relationships and practices. Unseen to the naked eye, this framework of social networks was the foundation upon which the organization had been built and continued to function. It is this social construct that I would unknowingly walk into when tasked to implement an IT tool which had the intent of formalizing existing informal working practices.

*Upon starting my new role as Demand and Pricing Manager<sup>3</sup> I was informed that I would take on the role of project manager for the IT implementation. The tool was one that had been developed in the US headquarters and was fully functional on the other side of the Atlantic<sup>4</sup>. The implementation had originally been slated to take place in the previous year, but for reasons to be revealed later in this thesis, had been postponed. Thus, it would be my role to bring the tool online for the EMEA organization. Having had past experience in system implementations, I found this to be a welcome challenge and was confident in my ability to manage the project. The purpose of the implementation was to automate the existing manual pricing policy and procedures to make it more simple, transparent and faster. Various organizational members had expressed that they found the current system to be cumbersome, time consuming and frustrating. Based upon these explanations I assumed that the project would be relatively straightforward and well accepted. Lesson learned, never, ever assume... (Reflective Journal, December 2012)*

What transpired was a rebellion against the proposed tool, the pricing policy, the IT implementation, management and, when I was acting in the role of project manager, me. During the project I encountered various forms of resistance from different members of the organization. Both direct and indirect

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<sup>1</sup>EMEA standing for Europe, Middle East and Africa

<sup>2</sup>The company name has been anonymized to protect the identity of the company and its employees.

<sup>3</sup>In this role I was responsible for the generation of the monthly product forecast and overseeing the annual price adjustment process.

<sup>4</sup> The American marketing and sales organization

attacks were used, subversive and covert actions were taken and when these methods were not effective, an insurrection took place. None of these actions were successful in stopping the project and their hopes of a revolution were dashed as the IT system went live on schedule.

What DID result as the course of these actions, however, was the stimulation of my own curiosity of WHY my colleagues, peers and self-professed “friends” responded so violently to what I viewed as a part of business life. WHAT was it that had caused them to turn their backs upon and rise up against something as basic as an IT tool? WHY were they so angry? And taking it a step further, WHY was it possible for them to sit at a table and eat a friendly lunch with me, discuss other business activities in a professional and amicable manner; but when the words IT project were mentioned, these same individuals would look upon me with disgust and loathing in their eyes and address me as though I was the Beelzebub of the business community.

*I personally found this to be painful and challenging, as I never knew when I was being viewed as friend or foe. I began to feel as though I was two different individuals, as though they (being the organization) viewed me differently based upon which role I was playing. At the start I was Nicole, the colleague who played the role of Demand Manager, baked cookies, drank my drink yogurt from a Dora the Explora thermos and was the eccentric American. Once the IT project had begun, I suddenly took on another role, IT Project Manager. In this role I was still Nicole, but was no longer the quirky colleague who carried around a cartoon character in her lunch box. I was something or someone else entirely. (Reflective Journal, December 2012)*

As I have previously mentioned, the purpose of the project was to automate an existing set of rules, specifically the pricing approval process. Until project go-live, this process had been managed via e-mails, faxes, phone calls, verbal contact, that is, through what are defined as informal practices. While there was a system of checks and balances in place, it was impossible to track and trace whether or not these steps had been followed. Furthermore, I quickly

learned that prices magically would appear in the PRISM<sup>5</sup> system with everyone involved claiming to have no knowledge of how they manifested themselves. Hence, the existing set of work practices did not fulfil the purpose for which they were created. During an external audit by an accounting firm, this issue was brought to light and management was confronted with a negative result. It was upon this result that management decided to implement the IT tool with the purpose of automating the existing set of rules. The organization itself had not asked for the tool, rather, in spite of all of the complaints, they were satisfied with the existing working practices. It is this detail which provides insight into WHY members of my own organization began to view me as two separate persons in the context of the IT implementation.

Using the Greek Myth of Scylla and Charybdis as an allegory I will describe how my role, management and the IT system were viewed by the organization. Scylla<sup>6</sup> is a horrible 6 headed beast from Greek Mythology who guards the narrow channel of water opposite Charybdis. Any ships attempting to cross through the strait needed to calculate their journey carefully to avoid either being dashed upon the rocks of Charybdis or being savagely devoured by Scylla. As project manager and system administrator I came to represent [to my peers] Scylla and management became Charybdis. Before this project the implementation members had freedom in setting prices, demonstrated by the ability for prices to spontaneously materialize in the PRISM system. During the implementation of the IT tool, these members were forced to navigate the narrow strait between myself, the system and management to enter pricing. There was a prescribed set of steps, tasks, actions and rules that had to be followed. A mistake would lead to either; being ravaged by me and the IT system, or a merciless bashing by management for not adhering to the policy.

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<sup>5</sup> PRISM- the Enterprise Resource Planning system used at the time.

<sup>6</sup>According to ancient Greek mythology, Scylla was a monster that lived on one side of a narrow strait of water, with its partner living on the other side, Charybdis. The two sides of the strait were so close to each other that sailors attempting to avoid Charybdis would pass too close to Scylla and vice versa.



However, this is not the element which makes this particular implementation unique. There is another third role which I came to play which increases the complexity of the situation.

*I have started a new job and have been tasked with implementing an IT tool to formalize a currently informal working process. While performing my job duties I become aware of the phenomenon that my colleagues respond differently to me depending on what task I am performing. Rather said, depended upon which role I am fulfilling. In one instance I am the liked colleague, someone to laugh with over lunch and enjoy an after work drink. In the second instance I embody evil in all of its likeness, someone to distrust, dislike and abhor. The backdrop against which this all plays out is the implementation of the IT tool, to automate the approval of discount prices. While the organization has expressed dissatisfaction with the current, informal processes, they have also not requested the automation of the process. Rather, the choice to implement comes from management, in the form of a requirement for an external audit. The organization is not enthusiastic about said decision, tool or implementation. This demonstrates itself in the behaviors exhibited by the organizational members with respect to the Project Manager, Nicole. Are you up to speed? Okay good, time to add in the third element. (Reflective Journal, December 2012)*

While performing my two different job roles, Demand and Pricing Manager, I became increasingly curious about WHY my colleagues were responding to me in such a distressing manner. I should be clear, these individuals did not appear to be distressed by their behavior, it was I who felt the distress. This 3 letter word, WHY, began to haunt my days and torment my dreams. WHY did they hate me so much? WHAT had I done to elicit such a reaction? After careful consideration I decided to make this project, The IT implementation, the focus of my DBA research, thereby adding a third element into the study. By selecting the IT implementation as the focus of my own study, I assume a third role in both the study, and for the organization, Nicole the researcher. From spring 2009 until August 2011 I executed this role in tandem with my other two internal roles. Beginning in September 2011, I ceased to be a member of the

company but continue in the role Nicole the researcher until the completion of this study.

The choice to use my own company and project as the subject of my DBA thesis was grounded in several elements. I was an existing member of the organization which I wanted to observe so had easy site access and the consent of the company to participate in the study. As the project manager of the phenomenon being studied I also had immediate access to the necessary information, meetings, documents, archival data required to conduct a robust study. Furthermore, as an existing member of the organization I had daily access to the individuals who would participate in this investigation.

### **Aims, Purpose and Limitations of the Study**

The aim of this study is to:

*Explain how the change agent is affected by the experience of leading change.*

Using an auto/ethnographic approach I follow one organization as it migrates through the stages of an IT implementation; pre-mid-post implementation, using actor-network theory as my guide. Employing reflexivity I reflect on my own perspective as Nicole the colleague, Nicole the project manager and Nicole the researcher and examine how my performance of those roles was influenced by the organizational response to each role and, also influenced how the organization responded to me when performing those roles.

The purpose of the study is to provide theoretical and managerial insights into the effects of multi-role performativity for the internal change agent when leading organizational change. Using actor-network theory I make visible the existing social networks prior to change and show how the roles performed by the change agent engage with this network. By recognizing and understanding how these networks function prior to change implementation, change managers can make informed choices on how to deal with their existence and reduce the friction during the change process. Recognition of role performativity and its implications on the actor/performer, others and the organization is the second managerial insight this study provides. Reflecting upon my own experience, I

reveal the personal and professional implications of how multi-role performativity affects the individual and their interaction with the organization when leading organizational change.

The limitations of the study are related to scope, time frame and use of an auto-ethnographic account. The scope is limited to the EMEA offices of one organization and takes place over a 3 year time period, from 2009-2012. The data presented is limited to events used to trace the social network, contextual information to provide the timeline and events directly related to the IT implementation. Other organizational changes which occurred during the research time frame are described but are not analyzed. By using auto-ethnography I have chosen to not strive for generalizability through replicability but to instead use an in depth account and analysis of my own experiences as a change agent to provide an explanation of how leading change affects the change agent.

## **Chapter Summary**

This chapter presents the reader with the information required to proceed into the following chapters of the dissertation. The background to the study is presented- in my workplace I, Nicole, am directed to manage the implementation of an IT tool to formalize the pricing approval process. When performing this role, I recognize that my colleagues respond to me differently than when I perform different job roles. This leads me to question why this behavior is happening; resulting in the development of a research project aimed at exploring why my peers respond differently to me as I assumed different roles during the IT implementation. Its purpose is to provide insight into the implications of multi- role performativity for the internal change agent. Scope and timeframe provide limitations to the study. The unit of observation and analysis is limited to one organization over a 3 year time period. In the next chapter literature related to the following concepts will be reviewed; organizational change management and the change agent, actor-network theory and performativity.

## Chapter 2 Literature Review

### Introduction

When I began this study I intended to write about the effects of using information technology (IT) to formalize informal working practices on intra-organizational relationships. The literature investigation focused on the role of IT in organizations, controlling or enabling; the dynamics of intra-organizational relationships and finally an exploration into the concept of power. Following a linear, positivist path, I began my theoretical investigation with the intent of creating a conceptual model which I used to devise my original research questions and planned to use to analyze my findings. The reality of how I created and used this literature review proved to be different from those plans.

*When reading the IT literature I found it to be stiff and detached, focusing on the functionality and administrative function/role of the IT systems rather than the people using them. I was unable to get excited about the topic and felt like I was being punished each time I sat down to read and write. It was during this timeframe that I was producing sub-standard preliminary research papers which were causing my supervisors concern. I recall my original supervisor telling me that I needed to become an expert on my topic, which made my heart sink as I wondered how I was going to become an expert in an area for which I felt no affinity. (Reflective Journal, 2014)*

The resulting literature review highlighted my discomfort in its lack of depth and breadth in its first two sections that focused on the role of IT and intra-organizational dynamics. The third section, the exploration into the concept of power, was where the chapter began to redeem itself. By the time I had chronologically reached the stage of writing the third section, I had begun my exploration into the realm of social-constructionism, post-structuralism and critical management studies. It was this exploration, combined with my personal experiences of leading an IT implementation and corresponding

organizational changes in my own organization which triggered me to re-think my study and theoretical framework. After changing supervisors and having further discussions about my research interests, methodological choices/changes and what I had experienced and the implications of the research I decided to re-work my theoretical framework to support the revised aim of the study: *to explain how the change agent is affected by the experience of leading change*.

By figuratively ‘throwing out’ my original literature review and beginning anew, I had also freed myself from the constraints created by its positivistic views, which were inhibiting the ability for my iterative, auto-ethnographic research self to write. Though the old literature review does not appear in this document, it remains in my archives as an artefact of the research and the researcher as they once were. I once wrote a poem to this aim stating “*your destiny lies before you, built upon the ruins of your past...*” Thus, this literature review is built upon the ruins of the old, without which it could not exist in its current state. It could be argued that my transformation [or translation] from a positivist to an auto-ethnographic researcher and the revisions made to this study [and chapter] provide additional insight into how change affects those involved in change processes. In the Discussion chapter of this thesis, I perform a deeper examination of the transformation myself as a researcher to further examine the effects of change on those engaged in change.

The resulting theoretical framework from making the changes described [forming the structure for this chapter] is as follows: in the first section I explore the concepts surrounding organizational change management, focusing specifically on the planned approach to change. In the second section I introduce actor-network theory as the means to gain a deeper insight into the translation stage [defined as move in planned approach to change] of change and how the different actors involved in the change process engage with each other and the network in movement. The chapter concludes with a discussion

on the performativity and role of the change agent within the actor-network when leading organizational change.

An iterative approach was used to select the literature reviewed in this chapter which is grounded in the iterative approach used in the study itself. As my study evolved and migrated from its original starting point; that is from a case study looking at the effects of formalizing work practices to an auto-ethnography using actor-network theory to explore the effects of leading change on the change agent, the literature that was relevant and necessary to carry out the investigation was continuously updated. In accordance with my choice for an auto-ethnographic approach combined with actor-network theory, the ontological and epistemological underpinnings of the literature eventually used lie in the post-modern, social-constructivist end of the spectrum. Foundational works by key theorists in the fields of organizational change [Lewin and Weick] and actor-network theory [Latour, Callon and Law] were used to build the foundation of the review. Supplemental texts are used to examine how these concepts have been deployed, applied, scrutinized, criticized and defended. The methods used to collect the literature included recommendations from peers and my supervisor, google scholar searches for the complete publication lists of key authors, use of the Erasmus University Library, use of the Bradford University Library, and use of the online journal search engines Jstor, ABN Inform and ProQuest Direct. The bibliographies of peer-reviewed articles, book chapters and monographs were also used as inspiration to search for additional texts.

## **Section 1- Organizational Change**

### **Introduction**

In this section I present the various typographies that are used to explain the concept of organizational change; grouping them together under the larger concepts of Planned Change, Continuous Change and Organizational Development, to determine if any of these is applicable in defining the change

process used by the Aspen company. This leads to a comparison of the 3 types of change against each other and a short discussion of their applicability to explaining the phenomenon I experienced when leading change. The section concludes with a short summary and transition to the next section wherein actor-network theory is presented as another approach to examining organizational change.

### **Organizational Change Typographies**

An understanding of organizational change is necessary to understanding organizations themselves and can be investigated from various perspectives (Ferreira & Armagan, 2011). Within the literature surrounding organizing and organization there are multiple typologies [for example: first, second and third order change (Bartunek & Michael, 1987); Life Cycle Theory, Evolution, Dialectic and Teleological (Van de Ven & Poole, 1995)] and models of change presented (Sturdy & Grey, 2003; Schein, 1995). This wide variety of options can be loosely categorized into two main perspectives that are debated; 1- that organizations are the result of causal relationships and static patterns or 2- that organizations are social constructs created by actors as they generate shared understandings of reality (Orlikowski, 1996; Maas & Ottenheim, 1994; Weick & Quinn, 1999). Though it is of course possible to examine the organization as a series of causal relationships, this is a positivistic approach which also assumes that the organization is a static thing which exists regardless of the movements of the actors within its boundaries. When examining the aim of this study, it is in direct contrast with what I seek to achieve and eliminates the possibility of the actors telling their story of their movements as the organization encountered change.

Beginning with the work of Lewin during the Second World War and beyond, the change process and organizational change processes have been under investigation and discussion (Burnes, 2004; Schein, 1995). Lewin's work focused on what is defined as the planned change process, an economically driven linear change process wherein the need to change is determined by a set of external factors, predominantly related to market economics, resulting in

company leaders deciding that change is/was necessary to keep up with the times. Planned Change is often used to drive changes which are necessary to increase economic value and focuses on dramatic, rapid and oftentimes painful changes that could not be achieved through a development strategy. It is deemed suitable when the problem is explicit, not too complex and the solution is achievable (Sturdy & Grey, 2003). Inherent in this type of change process is the concept that the change process has a beginning and an end point; the end point being time and goal bound, wherein the achievement of the goals set at the beginning of the change process are met thus signaling the end of the change process. This type of change occurs when the change agent takes intentional steps to move the organization from one state of being to another (Ford & Ford, 1995; Robertson, et al., 1993; Jian, 2007). In order to move the organization through the change process, Lewin argued that there is a series of 3 steps which punctuate the change process; initiation (unfreeze)- implementation (move) – outcome (re-freeze) (Boonstra, 2004; Weick & Quinn, 1999; Schein, 1995). Steps must be taken to first “unfreeze” the organization from its current state of working in order to “move” it through the translation process and then “re-freeze” in the new state, thus crystallizing the new processes, procedures and behaviors as defined by the goals of the change process (Burnes, 2004; Weick & Quinn, 1999).

During the first stage, unfreezing or initiation, the status quo or in situ state is destabilized in order to allow the group to ‘unlearn’ its previous behaviors and prepare for the learning of a new set of behaviors. This is in relation to a trigger which stimulates the organization to start the change process (Ferreira & Armagan, 2011) by creating a sense of concern and developing a commitment to change (Phillips, 1983). Huber et al. (1993) identify 5 triggers of change; structure, strategy, characteristics of top management, macro-economic and performance while others have examined the role of innovation in triggering change (Ferreira & Armagan, 2011; Greve & Taylor, 2000). Schein (1995) argues that for this unfreezing to occur, there must be form of dissatisfaction or disconfirmation of the existing process or data and that the people who make up the organization must feel ‘*survival anxiety or guilt*’ (p.4) to accept the



disconfirming information. In other words, the current process must be invalidated and the organizational community must accept the invalidation resulting in feeling a sense of urgency to change because of this invalidation. However, should the anxiety take the form of *“learning anxiety- , or the feeling that if we allow ourselves to enter a learning or change process, if we admit to ourselves and others that something is wrong or imperfect, we will lose our effectiveness, our self-esteem and maybe even our identity”* (Schein, 1995, p. 4); the unfreezing process can encounter resistance. The initiation of the change should also be examined as to whether it is episodic or continuous in nature. Episodic changes are intentional, infrequent and discontinuous in nature -compatible with organizational constructs created around the ideas of second-order change, the edge of chaos and punctuated equilibria (Weick & Quinn, 1999; Romanelli & Tushman, 1994; Bartunek & Michael, 1987). In the scenario of punctuated equilibria, the organization is one which is built around a network of interdependencies which tighten during periods of equilibrium (Weick & Quinn, 1999; Romanelli & Tushman, 1994; Robertson, et al., 1993) which can result in a lack of response to external changes. As the external environment changes pressure is placed on the network to adapt to meet the changes and a period of change is entered. Once the episode of change has passed and the new ways become the norms, the network stabilizes and enters into a new period of equilibrium wherein the changes are the norm.

In the second stage, moving or implementing, the group takes action [pushes for major change] (Phillips, 1983) and makes the transition from the previous state of being to the future state of being (Boonstra, 2004); the process of change (Ferreira & Armagan, 2011). A central feature to the analytic framework of episodic change is inertia. Romanelli & Tushman (1994) argue that it takes a revolution to alter the existing system of interrelated organizational elements that has or is maintained by mutual dependencies between the parts and external elements such as regulatory bodies and technological systems which actively legitimize the managerial decisions that created the organizational elements (Weick & Quinn, 1999).

During the final stage, re-freezing, the new set of behaviors and norms which have been established or arrived at during the moving stage are stabilized; the new vision is consolidated and reinforced (Phillips, 1983). This is often done through the use of organizational practices, policies, norms and culture (Burnes, 2004). Further characteristics of Planned Change are: a focus on economic measures of performance, new design of business processes, episodic change with stable end situation, techno-economical process rationality and strict norms and planning in change process (Boonstra, 2004; Buono & Subbiah, 2014).

This is a linear view of organizational change, one which assumes that by following the prescribed stages of un-freeze, move [or as I would define it translate], re-freeze, the goals determined at the start of the process will be met. It is also assumed that the organization will stop changing once the process has drawn to a close, that it no longer continues to evolve and develop with relation to the new processes and work procedures put into place. The planned approach begins with the end in mind, seeking to achieve a new state of equilibrium through a structured approach which emphasizes the benefits of achieving the end goal rather than the change process itself. Predicting the specific outcome of the moving stage during planned change is difficult (Robertson, et al., 1993) and can lead to unintended consequences which lead to the iterative approach of Action Research with its research, action, more research process being promoted by Lewin as a way to achieve a desirable outcome (Burnes, 2004).

It has been argued that planned change is impossible (Orlikowski & Hofman, 1997) and is actually the result of failing to create continuously adaptive organizations (Weick & Quinn, 1999) and just uses a story related to a change plan to embark on an implementation which generates unexpected results (Jian, 2007). Furthermore, the Planned Approach to change has been criticized for treating change as a unique, one-time event which needs to be managed

separately from daily organizational activities (Orlikowski, 1996), is inadequate in describing the various procedures used by organizations when managing change (Dunphy, 1993), ignores the dualities and tensions which exist in the organization (Van de Ven & Poole, 1995) and produces unintended positive or negative effects (Czarniawska-Joerges & Sevón, 1996). Positive consequences can be the accomplishment of interests, mutually acceptable change initiatives and heightened morale and trust while negative consequences can be a widening of the trust gap, loss of productivity and increased stress (Jian, 2007). Others take the position that organization itself is the result of ongoing, continuous change even though the concept of organization is one which seeks to stop change (Tsoukas & Chia, 2002). Thus, the concept of an organization and change are mutually dependent upon each other, one cannot exist without the other. Should change be planned, then one must assume that the organization is a fixed entity and not a social one in which the actors consistently perform to hold the construct in place. Change is understood by defining it as a series of movements which follow a linear path or a succession of positions (Tsoukas & Chia, 2002). However, if the organization is an outcome of the change process, then it becomes impossible to trace change in a linear path, as the starting point is continually changing. It is this series of arguments that brings us to the concept of continuous change.

Continuous change focuses on the concept that an organization is in a state of consistent, ongoing and cumulative evolution to continuously respond to both internal and external changes (Weick & Quinn, 1999). Tsoukas and Chia (2002) argue that change is a performance enacted in time which means that organizations are in a perpetual state of becoming. They claim that concepts are radially structured, being defined through the interaction of members of the internal environment with the external environment. Thus, to make sense of the external and give structure to the internal, organizational members create categories which allow them to generalize and group together actions, movements and actors. They (Tsoukas & Chia, 2002) go on to claim that interactions with the external results in human actors re-defining these categories, thus resulting in a constant re-definition of the concepts which are

used to frame their understanding of both the internal and external. It is this dual movement which results in the continuous nature of change. Feldman's (2000) description of housing management at a major US university demonstrates this double movement as she provides accounts of how the housing offices deal with the moving out/moving in activities of students. As each year unfolds, learnings from the previous year's activities are built into the 'new' set of processes and procedures used to manage the logistics. Though the internal goals remain the same, the methods used to achieve those goals are modified and successes are re-defined based on the interaction with the external environment. When comparing this Continuous Change perspective to that of Planned Change, it becomes visible that in this approach the change processes occurring are neither initiated by an economic goal nor are they being planned and executed in a sequential manner. Rather, the change is unfolding as a result of the organization organizing itself and engaging in sense-making as a response to interactions with the external environment. This is consistent with Orlikowski's (1996) position on change, what she defines as organizational transformation, as being grounded in the ongoing activities of the actors as they improvise to deal and make sense of changes going on around them. The actors involved in the process consistently re-calibrate their definitions to construct a shared understanding of what is occurring internally and externally (Orlikowski & Hofman, 1997). The change process is a social phenomenon that cannot be planned and its outcomes cannot be predicted. This raises the question: is it possible to define continuous change as a change process that can be managed or is it just the inherent status quo of humans making sense of the changing world around them? The issue for me when examining this concept of change, though it approaches change from a social constructivist, possibly a post-modernist perspective, is it really looking at change or is it just stating the obvious, that all organizations progress through a sense making process as they respond to the changes going on around them. Furthermore, if it is not possible to chart where the change process has begun and ended, can it truly be defined as a change. If you don't know where you are to start with, how do you know that you have moved or changed at all? Have you actually changed or has the spectrum on which you stand shifted, thus giving the illusion that change has occurred when in reality, you are exactly the same as you were

before? These criticisms hark back to those hurled at the concept of Planned Change, wherein the organization itself is a result of the change process. Thus, we again arrive at the same sticking point, if the end is the beginning, then how does one effectively examine the movement if it is not possible to identify the start? This leads me to the third and final concept of organizational change that I will examine, Organizational Development.

Situated on the change spectrum between Planned Change and Continuous Change lies Organizational Development (Schein, 1995); the concept that change is initiated with the goal of further developing organizational competencies and is not related to a specific economic or market driven goal. In this situation the company embarks on a change journey to foster collective learning or development of the organization as a whole (Boonstra, 2004). Though the change process is one of an iterative nature in comparison to the externally driven one of Planned Change, this approach to organizational change does begin with a goal in mind; to foster learning as opposed to the organic, evolutionary process suggested in Continuous Change. While I could discuss this thread further, when applying this concept or definition of change in relation to the phenomenon I am studying, it is not applicable. Thus, I will keep the examination brief and move to the next point.

When comparing the different approaches to organizational change, it is possible to categorize their individual characteristics which allows one to further examine the similarities and differences; as is shown in Table 2.1.

**Table 1 Planned Change, Organization Development and Continuous Changing (adapted from Boonstra, 2004)**

<b>Planned Change</b>	<b>Organization Development</b>	<b>Continuous Changing (and constructing realities)</b>
Organizations as adaptive systems to market demands	Organizations as purposeful socio-technical system	Organizing and changing is an ongoing process of inter-activities, sense-making , and self- making
Human beings as social capital to perform objectives	Human beings as creating and collaborative people	Human beings construct organizing and changing as social realities by multiple interaction and sense-making
Employees motivated by personal advantage	Employees motivated by developing human potential	Employees, organizational leaders, and consultants interact and work together in non-hierarchical manner
Managers using position power in steering changes	Managers using personal power in mutual collaboration	Changing and organizing are processes of endless modifications in work processes and social realities
Consultants as knowledge-driven experts	Consultants as process-driven facilitators	Changing and organizing are rooted in multiple realities to facilitate ways of relating that are open to new possibilities
Organization life as a source of shortcomings	Organization life as a source of experience	Changing and organizing become continuous and interrelated processes in which all participants are involved
Focus on economic measures of performance	Focus on improvement of effectiveness and working life	Focus on agreements and modifications based on interweaving activities, interrelations, and sense-making
New design of business processes	Improvements based on existing organization	Involvement of all stakeholders as participants in a joint process of transformation and learning
Top-down steering of change process	Utilization of knowledge and insight of personnel	Searching of new possibilities in a continuous process of transformation and learning
Solution-oriented based on value chain	Problem-oriented based on working experiences	Continuous changing with no end state; accumulation of endless small agreements

**Table 2 Contd. Planned Change, Organization Development and Continuous Changing (adapted from Boonstra, 2004)**

Planned Change	Organization Development	Continuous Changing (and constructing realities)
Episodic change with stable end situation	Continuous improvement	Cyclical process of changing and equilibrium seeking between stability and change: freeze-rebalance-unfreeze-freeze
Single linear change process	Iterative change process	Social constructionist rationality in which relations and realities are constructed as real in their consequences
Techno-economical process rationality	Socio-political process rationality	An ongoing process of improvising, sense-making, and agreeing
Strict norms and planning in change process	Regard for ability to change in emergent change process	Concrete inter-activities in multiple, local-historical, and social realities
Start with abstract business models	Start with concrete working experiences	Changing is a collaborative approach in which everyone contributes as an expert
Emphasis on expert knowledge	Application or operational knowledge	Inquiring, intervening, and changing stay joined
Separation of design and implementation of changes	Smooth transition between phases in change	Learning and knowledge development as process of interaction, reflection, and sense-making by all participants
Learning as reflection by change managers	Learning as a collective and ongoing activity	
Knowledge development by using techniques	Knowledge development by action research	

When applying the typology of these different perspectives on organizational change to the change process examined in this study, while they provide sufficient information to categorize the type of change process which was initiated [in this case Planned Change] they do not provide enough insight into the actual change process itself, the stage defined by Lewin as move or what Orlikowski (1996) defines as transformation as members seek to create a shared understanding. I seek to uncover the answer to the question, why did my colleagues respond to me differently as I performed different roles during the change process? The answer to this question lies in a further examination of the social construct or network engaged in the change process, the actors who comprise that network, the actual movements taken and the role(s) I performed within that network. In the next section I will examine actor-network theory as

an approach to gaining further understanding into the social network involved in the change process and my role in that network.

## **Summary**

In this section I examined the existing literature surrounding organizational change and several of the typographies that are used to define and categorize the change process. When applying these typographies to the aim of this research, though useful in defining the type of change that was intended by company management, Planned Change, the definitions failed to provide me with the methods necessary to explore why my colleagues responded to my role as the change agent in the way they did. Therefore, it is necessary to examine the usability of another theoretical frame as the means to gain a deeper understanding into my experiences when leading change. I have chosen to explore actor-network theory as a method for exploring how actors within socio-technical networks move through the states of translation to gain further insight into the transformation (Orlikowski, 1996) stage of change.

## **Section 2- Actor-network theory**

### **Introduction**

As identified in the previous section, I am in need of a method to examine the network in-situ that was unfrozen, that allows me to trace the movement of the actors as they 'move' during the second stage of planned change and identify how the third stage of re-freezing was achieved. I have chosen to follow the tenets of actor-network theory also known as the sociology of translation to follow this process. To examine translation within the frame of actor-network theory it becomes necessary to examine how the ability to exert agency is being exchanged between actors within the network, thus defining their roles within the network. Using this as my point of departure, the next destination is an examination of actor-network theory and the framework it provides for the exploration of the process of translation within the actor network.



Actor-network theory is in itself neither a theory nor a method (Latour, 2005a); it is rather a means to an end, allowing for the social to be made visible through the use of narratives (Strathern, 1996) wherein the researcher can trace the linkages created by the actors who perform within it. In my own study, my aim is to discover why my colleagues responded to me differently as I performed different roles within the existing organizational construct; specifically related to an IT system implementation. Due to its socio-technical nature, ANT lends itself as a useful 'method' for this exercise. In the second section I examine ANT, its operationalization in the form of the sociology of translation and ways in which it has been put into practice. In the final section I discuss performativity and make my choice about which perspectives to use further in the thesis.

### **Actor-network theory**

Actor-network theory is part of the constructivist tradition which falls under the category of science and technology studies (Moltu, 2008). Gaining momentum in the 1980s a group of sociologists which include Michel Callon, Bruno Latour (Clegg, 1989) and John Law explored the concept of power by examining the social process which results in the production of scientific facts. The method or theory was initially defined by Callon (1986) as the 'sociology of translation', a name earned through the method it describes (Clegg, 1989); the way in which participants in a network engage with one another. It is through these interactions that power is constructed, attributed and exacted; the move wherein the relationships between potentially opposite or opposed sets of interests are displaced within an organization of social actors and knowledge (Brown & Capdevila, 1999). The three main principles upon which this approach is based are agnosticism, generalized symmetry and free association (Callon, 1986). Agnosticism is the '*impartiality between actors engaged in controversy*'; generalized symmetry is '*the commitment to explain conflicting viewpoints in the same terms*' and free association is '*the abandonment of all a priori distinctions between the natural and the social*' (Callon, 1986, p. 196; Callon & Latour, 1981; Latour, 1999). Latour calls this symmetrical anthropology or '*the application of ethnographic methods to scientific practice*' (2007, p. 12) wherein

existing divisions of labor/culture are disregarded, thus flattening the ethnographic landscape. The approach focuses on abandoning the traditional approach of inserting a priori interests or distinctions (Callon & Latour, 1981; Clegg, 1989; Latour, 1991) and focuses rather on the development or construction of networks by the actors themselves. The network is defined as *“the tracery of heterogeneous elements that constitute such an object or event, or string of circumstances held together by social interactions: it is in short a hybrid imagined in a socially extended state”* (Strathern, 1996, p. 521). The network is nothing more than a *‘string of obligations’* (Strathern, 1996, p. 524) or interdependent relationships between actors whose [the network] boundaries are defined by those actors who belong to it. An actor is defined as; *“whatever acts or shifts actions, action itself being defined as a list of performance through trials”* (Akrich & Latour, 1992, p. 259; Callon & Latour, 1981). By following the actors through a series of stages as they engage in the process of translation, it becomes possible to map out how actors organize or ‘translate’ events into resources, organization control networks, alliance, coalition, antagonism, interest and structure to achieve desired outcomes (Clegg, 1989; Latour, 1991; Latour, 1983; Latour, 2005a; Law, 1986; Law, 1991). *“For Callon and Latour, power stands for a range of associations: actors interact with other actors (including non-humans) and the more numerous and important their associations are, the greater is the power of the whole network thus created”* (Czarniawska-Joerges & Sevón, 1996, p. 6).

Callon (1986) presents his case for the sociology of translation by applying the concept to a natural phenomenon, the decline of scallops in St. Brieuc Bay and the subsequent project aimed at increasing their numbers. The translation model is one which is based on the definition of power being something which cannot be possessed; rather it is something which is felt as the consequence of action (Greener, 2006; Latour, 1986; Callon & Latour, 1981). It is through the action of performing that the actor exerts power, resulting in the action of other actors. Latour (1986) continues to define the translation model as that “in which such a command, if it is successful, results from the actions of a chain of agents each of whom ‘translates’ it in accordance with his/her own projects”. Since in

the translation model, power is composed here and now by enrolling many actors...is not something which can be stored up and give to the powerful by a pre-existing 'society' "...ANT tries to assume nothing. It looks to organization to see how its forms emerge" (Letiche & Hagemeyer, 2004, p. 264). Callon (1986) introduces a vocabulary which he uses to trace the actors through the network (Latour, 2005a) by splitting translation (the translation of power) into four phases; problematization, interessement, enrolment and mobilization. In the presentation of this vocabulary, Callon (1986) provides a tool for how to use actor-network theory to create a sociotechnical account. Greener (2006), drawing on the work of Munro (1999 as cited in Greener 2006) introduces two additional stages to Callon's translation concept which focus on the disintegration of an actor-network. Greener argues that though Callon presents the stages by which the network is created, he does not address what happens when an actor-network collapses. Greener (2006) provides us with the stages of remobilization where in the previously interested actors identify events as successes or failures through the use of 'technologies of management' (p. 424). Upon the basis of these assessments, the actors then demobilize themselves from the existing network. Using the original concept of Callon, it could also be argued that this is merely the creation of a new, competing network resulting from the previous network to maintain its durability. Thus, is this truly remobilization or just an inevitable outcome?

The second new stage introduced by Greener (2006) is disentanglement, the stage in which the actors who have demobilized themselves from the previous, disenfranchised network seek to disassociate themselves from that network. In his examination of the Barings Bank case, Greener examines the various methods used by multiple actors to avail themselves of blame and association with the rogue trader and his network. In other words, they took the approach; I wasn't involved, it wasn't my fault.

In his original presentation of the sociology of translation, Callon (1986) also presents the aftermath of the study about scallop reproduction and raises the

question of durability of the network. This is a possible fifth stage, when the social ties created in the first four phases breaks down, dissidence. In the dissidence stage the premise upon which the network was established is called into question by the actors and controversy ensues. "Closure occurs when the spokesmen are deemed to be beyond question" (Callon, 1986, p. 220). Thus, merely moving through the translation process is not a guarantee that the network created will maintain its durability. Only when there is no question about the validity of the spokespersons and the gospel they preach is the network truly durable (Latour, 1991).

Law (1986) argues that control, or rather long distance control, is dependent upon a network of human and non-human actors that creates the conditions for agents to move in a way that allows them to maintain force, loyalty and durability. "Mobility, durability, capacity to exert force, ability to return- these seem to be indispensable if remote control is to be attempted" (p.241). Callon and Law (1988) argue that the work of the technologist is one which is "profoundly" social. Building from this concept Brown and Middleton (2005) examine how the baby in a neonatal care unit acts as the 'object' around which the rest of the actors organize themselves. They use the sociology of translation as the vocabulary to describe the neonatal unit as a network of human and non-human actors who engage in different associations as the care of the baby evolves.

There are four stages or moments of translation (Callon, 1986; Clegg, 1989) ; problematization, interessement, enrolment and mobilization. It is in these stages where actors attempt to impose themselves and/or their beliefs on other actors or the situation at hand (Callon, 1986). Problematization is explained as the stage where one, some or many of the actors involved attempt to make themselves indispensable to the other actors. This is through the definition of a problem and a proposed solution to the problem. However, in order to solve or resolve the problem, the other actors in the network must pass through a pre-defined 'obligatory passage point' (Callon, 1986), a ritual, stage, process etc. as

defined by the problem solving actors. It is only by passing through this point can the problem be solved. Callon (1986) also refers to this stage as "*The problemitization or how to become indispensable*" (Callon, 1986, p. 203). Once a set of actors have made themselves indispensable, they must next lock the other actors in the network into place (Callon, 1986; Clegg, 1989) through a series of processes, known as *interessement*.

*"Interessement is the group of actions by which an entity...attempts to impose and stabilize the identity of the other actors it defines through its problemitization"* (Callon, 1986, p. 208).

The processes and tools by which this is achieved can vary per case; however the goal is the same, to firmly lock or define the roles of the actors involved. This serves two purposes; first, it checks to make sure that all actors who need to be involved for the next stage have been included and secondly, it also tries to disrupt and eliminate any possible competing networks which could form conflicting alliances. (Callon, 1986; Clegg, 1989) Once an actor has become interested, it has then been tagged for membership into the network. However, this does not mean that all actors have yet accepted or submitted to their roles. This is the next stage in the process, *enrolment*.

*"No matter how constraining the trapping device, no matter how convincing the argument, success is never assured. In other words, the device of interessement does not necessarily lead to alliances, that is, to actual enrolment"* (Callon, 1986, p. 211).

It is in the enrolment stage where the actors must choose to accept or submit themselves to the roles which had been defined during *interessement*. In a simple example, this would be the acceptance of a job offer or the physical enrollment into a university program. By pledging membership the actor accepts

or submits its role in the network and by doing so severs all ties to other possible networks (Callon, 1986). Those actors who have established the roles for the others will then seek to use these roles to build alliances between the actors they have put into place (Clegg, 1989). These alliances can then be used to achieve the goals and objectives for which they were established.

The last stage of translation is mobilization, the stage where the various roles and alliance are crystallized and put into action (Callon, 1986; Clegg, 1989). This is the set of methods or actions which are used by the actors who have designed the network to ensure that the participating actors will fulfill their roles as defined and adhere to the conditions set during the stages of interessement and enrollment (Callon & Latour, 1981; Clegg, 1989). It is during this stage that representatives or spokespersons are selected to speak on behalf of the various roles (Callon, 1986). Spokespersons are those actors who simplify the networks of others (who may or may not consent) by representing their interests, attributing identity, establishing roles, and advancing a course of action.<sup>7</sup>

Latour (1986) expands upon the approach of Callon and states that an actor who is not acting, does not possess power. Rather, it is when another actor acts in response to the first exerting his/her/its power that the first actor has power.

*“When an actor simply has power nothing happens and s/he is powerless; when, on the other hand, an actor exerts power it is others who perform the action”* (Latour, 1986, p. 264).

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<sup>7</sup> [http://www.sagepub.com/upm-data/5222\\_Ritzer\\_\\_Entries\\_beginning\\_with\\_A\\_\\_\[1\].pdf](http://www.sagepub.com/upm-data/5222_Ritzer__Entries_beginning_with_A__[1].pdf)

This is what Latour (1986) presents as the performative role of power. Power is something which is performed rather than something which can be given or possessed. It is only when actors are performing their roles that power exists. When no action is being performed, no power exists or is detectable. The performativity of actors and power is linked to the translation process presented by Callon (1986). Thus, power is not a cause of human or actor behaviors, but rather it is a consequence of those behaviors (Latour, 1986; Latour, 1991; Law, 1991).

Law (1986) discusses the possibility of using non-human actors or the use of a network of passive agents to perform power as a form of long-distance control. Through an examination of the methods used by the Portuguese in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries to exert control over their naval trade routes he argues for how a combination of human and non-human actors was used to achieve dominance of the high seas (Law, 1986). In this account the term durability is used to describe the ability of a product or concept to endure the test of time and perform its intended role. Through the construction of a network of passive agents (human and non-human) control is achieved through the ability of those agents to be mobile and durable, and the capacity to exert force is also required (Law, 1986; Strathern, 1996). In the case of the Portuguese these passive actors consisted of documents, devices and people all working together to ensure the mobility, durability and exertion of control from a distance.

*“Texts of all sorts, machines or other physical objects, and people...frequently in combination, these seem to be the obvious raw material for the actor who seeks to control others at a distance”* (Law, 1986, p. 225).

Thus, it is possible for human and non-human actors to work in combination in order to exert control, agency or power over another set of actors, also at a distance. The dis-humanization of the actor is not a new concept. Rather, this is one which is a fundamental aspect of the actor-network theory (Latour, 1991;

Callon, 1986; Law, 1991; Latour, 1983; Strathern, 1996). An actant is defined as; *“whatever acts or shifts actions, action itself being defined as a list of performance through trials”* (Akrich & Latour, 1992, p. 259) while an actor is <sup>8</sup>*“any system element which influences others in the network, be it a human, a text or an artifact”*. This makes it possible for a human, an object, a technology and so forth, to be an actor. Actors define each other through their interaction and in the intermediaries that they use. Intermediaries are defined as; *“anything passing between actors which defines the relationship between them”* (Callon, 1991, p. 134). The four types of intermediaries are texts, technical artefacts, human beings and money (Callon, 1991; Latour, 1986).

### **Use of Actor-network theory**

Actor-network theory has been widely used in Accounting (Skearbaek & Melander, 2004; Justesen & Mouritsen, 2011) and Information Technology. Justesen and Mouritsen (2011) compiled a review of over fourteen accounting studies using ANT, arguing that it has influenced accounting research in several ways with the main areas of focus being on accounting change. The barrier between the non-human actors is broken down and the change process is examined using the translation concept wherein the change is not explained through reference to external variables; rather it is something which occurs through the movements of the actors themselves. In the field of Information Technology, ANT and the sociology of translation has been used to analyze the process of IT appropriation and implementation (Hussenot, 2008; Tatnall & Burgess, 2002). Tatnall and Burgess (2002) applied the translation concept to trace the implementation of a business to business portal for SMEs in Australia while Hussenot (2008) combines the structurational model of technologies (Tsoukas & Chia, 2002) and ANT to analyze the dynamics of IT appropriation. When examining the discussion of power in relation to IT systems Bekkers (1998) argues that the access and control of information in network organizations is a very important power resource as it reduces uncertainty. The control of information implies that an actor can try to influence the definition and

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<sup>8</sup> <http://latourbugblog.blogspot.nl/2009/01/actor-network-theory-terms-and-concepts.html>



perceptions of other actors according to his own interests and preferences. *“Those actors who control the design of systems and the structure of the information carried upon them, put their own marks on the way the organization is known. In structuring the information and its flow, information systems embed techniques and routines which reflect and re-produce the dominant ways of doing, seeing and thinking in organizations”* (Bellamy, 1998, pp. 298-299). The actors who control the use of the IT system also exert control over the distribution of information and resources in and between organizations (Beckkers, 1998). Hence, the usefulness of ANT in making networks visible and therefore generating the ability to trace the actors in their movements allots itself to identifying which actors are the ones exerting agency within the network through the use of IT systems.

### **Criticisms of actor-network theory**

Actor-network theory has been criticized by feminists as ‘studying from above’ (Moltu, 2008, p. 5; Whittle & Spicer, 2008), meaning that it is those who are creating the network; the manager, the leader, who are moving the network through the stages of translation. Law (1991) explores this thread further and asks why ANT studies often follow the stories of those who are heroes, large companies or significant projects. He argues that this occurs for two reasons; first the desire to debunk the myth that the hero is different from the common man and second, because they are large and powerful. Through their size and influence they shape the standard in place of those who are less successful or influential. The ANT researcher must be careful not to fall into the trap of only following those who are powerful, but s/he must also follow the paths of the victims and the differences in their two fates (Law, 1991). Callon and Latour (1981) offer further advice telling us that though of course there is a difference between the micro and the macro actor, it is important to recognize that their differences lie in the network construction and power relationships and not in an a priori distinction. They tell us *“no actor is bigger than another except by means of a transaction (a translation) which must be examined”* (p. 280). A macro-actor is no larger or more complex than a micro-actor, the difference lies only in how they are able to deploy the methods of translation. In this study, I

must be aware to not only trace the movement of myself as the change agent and the technological actors, but also to demonstrate awareness of the movements of the actors in the competing networks during the translation process. To achieve complete translation these networks had to be destabilized and the interests of those groups debunked. Thus, they can be classified as the victims in comparison to my own role and the technology I had partnered with.

Others have criticized ANT for its inability to understand the why or how a technology is interpreted in different ways by different actors and argue that it lacks the ability to conduct a deep analysis of the stabilizing activities in an organization as a constructed achievement (Whittle & Spicer, 2008). This can lead to the tendency to generalize the characteristics of artefacts and objects, which limits the ability to analyze what leads to the multiple uses of technological objects or artefacts in different organizational settings. Hence, when using actor-network theory, one must be conscious that s/he does not fall into the trap of accepting that all actors within the network accept the meaning of the artefact being deployed, rather s/he must question what other understandings may exist within the network and how those understandings have been constructed. S/he is also responsible for taking stock of the analytical tools needed to pursue this line of questioning further. Critics further attack the 4 stage approach stating that classifying the different movements into categories results in ANT being a positivistic, non-reflexive method (Whittle & Spicer, 2008) spawning a series of organization studies that seek to prove the universality of the approach and its linear assumptions.

Latour's response to the criticism that actor-network theory is not reflective is to present the concept of infra-reflexivity with the instruction, "*instead of writing about how (not) to write, just write*" (Latour, 1988, p. 170). What he means with this statement is for the writer to not assume a meta position using a prescribed vocabulary for reflective analysis when writing an ANT account, but to rather 'follow the actors' (2005a). Through their actions they [the actors] will demonstrate to us their understanding. Reflexivity is achieved through the

stylistic approach used in reporting the movement of the actors in a “*lively, interesting, perceptive and suggestive*,” (Latour, 1988, p. 170) way and redirecting the attention to the reader herself. This un-scientific way of studying the sciences and producing texts results in “*displaying the knower and the known and the work needed to interrupt or create connections between A and B*” (Latour, 1988, p. 172). In other words, by producing a text which shows how the relationships [connections] between actors are created or destroyed, the ANT researcher achieves infra-reflexivity, wherein the reader is challenged to question her/himself rather than focusing on questioning the truth of the account or the individual who produced it. The reflexivity is produced by causing the reader to reflect for or upon her/himself in relation to the movements described on the page.

However, if we follow the actors, we may lose our critical distance from them; we begin to see the world through their eyes and take on the perspective of those under investigation (Law, 1991). Then how does the ANT researcher cope with this circular dilemma; being careful not to generalize the understanding actors have of the technology and following them without becoming one of them? If we look back to the definition of actors and the ways in which they define themselves, the answer can be found. Callon (1991) tells us that “*actors define one another through the intermediaries which they put into circulation*” (p. 140) and that it [an actor] “*is any entity that more or less successfully defines and builds a world filled by other entities with histories, identities, and interrelationships of their own*” (p. 140). Thus, if we follow the actors we can identify the intermediaries they deploy themselves, making it possible to reveal the identity of the actor, uncover its understanding or interpretation of a technology and conduct a deep analysis of the stabilizing activities used to construct a network or organization.

In my case, I have combined the intra-reflexivity of actor-network theory (Latour, 1988) to trace the movements of the actors and combined that with the reflexivity of the auto-ethnographic approach. By examining myself as an object

of the research situated within the translation process, I both follow the actor and explore my own deployment of intermediaries. This creates a double layer of analysis wherein I both follow the actors in the network and question how, through my own actions; I defined myself and the understanding of the intermediaries within the network to the other actors. By tracing their intermediary deployment in the form of a response to my actions, it is possible to identify how they interpreted the intermediaries I had deployed and allows for the exploration of multiple versions of the translation process (Lee & Brown, 1994).

Speaking of intermediaries, the final critique of ANT that I will address is related to the concept of giving objects agency and the breaking down of the barrier between the human and non-human. How is it that an inanimate object can exert agency? Who gives this object 'agency' within actor-network theory? Is it in fact the researcher who is assigning the agency, then again bringing the reflexivity of the approach into question and raising the issue of the top down view? Or does the answer lie elsewhere. Again Latour tells us to 'follow the actors' and examine the intermediaries they deploy to define themselves within the network (Latour, 2005a; Callon, 1991; Latour, 1999). If the ANT researcher is rigorous in applying the approach, it is not she or he that can give objects agency. Rather, it is assigned by the actors in the network themselves and their responses to the object which allows it agency or not; assuming that the network is a suitable method for describing how linkages can be created between actors without assigning a priori distinctions or making assumptions about hierarchy or level (Strathern, 1996). For example, the street where I grew up had a four way intersection at the end. Placed at this intersection was a group of stop signs informing motorists that they should stop and look both ways before proceeding. The sign was nothing more than a construction of steel, plastic and paint; yet, it played an important role in traffic regulation. When learning to drive I was taught that one must always stop at a stop sign, regardless of whether there was any other traffic. The result, I always stop at a stop sign. Therefore, my action of stopping in front of a sign attributes agency to the sign. If I choose to ignore the sign and drive through without being seen

by a traffic cop, then the sign loses its agency. However, should I ignore the sign and be seen by the traffic cop, he can pull me over and issue a fine for failing to obey the traffic laws; again attributing agency to the sign (Clegg, 1989; Latour, 1991).

ANT is further criticized for missing the point that the division between the human and non-human is something which results from a division of labor in which the human actors define the non-human (Whittle & Spicer, 2008). Thus, the agency exerted by the non-human actors is created through a human process, thus negating the dualism that actor-network theory purposes to remove. This raises the question, how can it be said that there is no a priori distinction between the two when in fact, the one is dependent upon the other to give it agency and a voice? The answer to the question lies in the black boxing of relationships and practices within the network and the homogenous and heterogenous nature of networks (Strathern, 1996). Callon and Latour say ... *“human actors are able to rely not only on symbolic relations, but also on more ‘durable’ materials...”* (1981, p. 277)

A process, object or relationship becomes black boxed when actors no longer question the linkages it creates; rather they accept it as the status quo and integrate it into their activities (Brown & Middleton, 2005; Callon & Latour, 1981). Going back to the example of the stop sign, I must admit that I never questioned why it was necessary for me to obey its command regardless of traffic flow. Nor did I question why the traffic officer would issue a fine should I ignore the command or what would happen to the traffic flow if I should not subject to the agency of the sign. Rather, I accepted the system as it was, a black box of relationships that had been established somewhere in the world of traffic law. Though my actions were human in nature, I did not employ my uniquely human capability of sense making to opening the black box and questioning its existence. Therefore, I broke down the dualism between the human and non-human through my own actions. I accepted the non-human as having agency, as having a voice and did not question otherwise.

The ability of human actors to take ownership of intermediaries cuts the network or limits the chain of claimants and creates a boundary around who belongs to the group who can 'own' and deploy the intermediary for their own purpose. If the human can attribute property rights, and the ownership defines the boundary of the network, then the thing itself becomes the boundary of the network (Strathern, 1996) which also defines the right of the person owning the object. Therefore the human agency and the non-human agency become intertwined. The object speaks for the person and the person speaks for the object. Thus, there is no division between the two.

### **My ANT or Planned Change and Actor-network theory**

*"Change, we argue, is the reweaving of actors' webs of beliefs and habits of action to accommodate new experiences obtained through interactions".*

(Tsoukas & Chia, 2002, p. 567)

Tsoukas and Chia (2002) argue that change is a profoundly human activity and in her work on performativity in organizational routines. Feldman (2000) follows the people performing/applying organizational routines and describes how those routines change as actors respond to the outcomes of previous iterations of the routine. She calls for a focus on the role of agency in the ways in which [organizational] structures are modified and transformed through organizational processes. Though I agree with the concept that change is the reweaving of actor's beliefs and habits and that a richer picture of the change process can be gained by following the actors as they perform, my choice for actor-network theory strips away the requirement for change to be a human activity. Therefore I adapt this argument to state that change is an actor driven process, and insofar as the actors work to re-weave their understanding of the routines, then the potential for translation exists, wherein translation is defined as the stages the actors move through as they re-weave their understanding and routines. The way in which this movement takes place is what determines which actor(s) are exerting agency. Thus, it is not necessary to choose for which type of change is taking place, rather it becomes more important to recognize that

when movement within the network occurs, it is change. This shifts the focus from defining what the movement is to how the movement takes place and the methods used by the actors to stimulate, facilitate and stabilize the movement (Callon, 1986; Callon & Law, 1988; Latour, 1986; Latour, 2005a; Brown & Middleton, 2005; Law, 1991). This focus on the movement allows for a focus on agency in the way organizational routines are adapted during the translation process (Feldman, 2000). However, to trace this agency, though it may not be necessary to categorize the change into typography, using an existing framework to define the change process is helpful in setting the boundaries of the system to be examined. As stated in the previous section I have chosen to take this route to limit the focus of the examination.

When comparing the concept of Planned Change (Boonstra, 2004) with the sociology of translation as defined by Callon (1986) and the stages of actor-network theory (Latour, 2005a) a similarity between the 3 frameworks becomes visible. All 3 approaches focus on the change process itself, i.e. the stages of movement which are undertaken in order to progress from one state of being to another. These three stages, un-freeze-move-re-freeze in Lewin's Planned Change are similar to the 3 moves defined by Latour (2005a; 1983): localizing the global-redistributing the local- connecting the sites. They are also similar to the 4 stages of translation identified by Callon, problematization-interessement-enrollment- mobilization. During the first stage of all 3 approaches the actors within the network in-situ are confronted with a reason to begin the translation process. In the case of Planned Change this is often an external economic factor, which incentivizes company management to begin the change process. What the Planned Change approach does not address is the question; How does the management convince the other actors in their network, the company, that a change is necessary? The answer to this question lies in the first stage of ANT or the translation process, what Callon (1986) defines as problematization and Latour (2005a) calls localizing the global. Schein (1995) calls this stage the disconfirmation stage wherein the existing system is deemed unsuitable through the introduction of disconfirming information which must be accepted by the network; resulting in feelings of guilt or survival anxiety for the actors stimulating

them to accept the need to change. Should this acceptance not occur, then the process will stall as the actors go into resistance mode stimulated by fears of loss of identity, effectiveness or self-esteem. Thus, while Lewin and Schein identify the stage, it is Latour and Callon that provide the method to engage in a deeper investigation into the how. The question of the how leads further down the path to question not only the how but the who and the what, or better said which actors are engaged in this stage and what is the consequence of their taken actions when performing the how. This leads me to question; How does the process of un-freezing the network in-situ affect the network and change the dynamics between the actors within that network? And how is it possible to know if the network has been successfully unfrozen and is ready to proceed to the next stage of movement? The answer to these two questions can be found in the second stage of the sociology of translation, interessement. As Callon (1986) tells us, there are various methods which can be deployed by the actors who are engaged in this how stage to convince the other actors that their problem and solution is THE one and only route to success. In order to be successful in un-freezing the network to begin the move or translation stage, the actors who wish to initiate the change must de-stabilize any competing networks. In ANT, this is part of the first stage, localizing the global, during which the actors demonstrate their ability to translate the global, that is, a large problem external to the social network, into something which can be managed at a local level. Latour (1983) gives an example of this in his analysis of the work of Louis Pasteur and how he was able to translate the issue of resolving an anthrax outbreak across the countryside of France through the use of a vaccine developed in his laboratory. By making the virus something which was able to be managed at a local level, he was able to translate a national issue into something which could be managed at the individual farm level. Looking at this concept through the lens of Planned Change, it can be argued that due to its characteristic of being often driven by external economic factors, in order for the Planned Change process to be initiated, the key actors (in this study management) must be able to translate the global into the local. Should this not occur, then the un-freeze stage would never begin. Thus, in order to un-freeze, the process of localizing the global must have occurred. Schein (1995) tells us that psychological safety must be created in order for the actors to accept the



disconfirmation of the situation in-situ and that “*the true artistry of change management lies in the various kinds of tactics that change agents employ to create psychological safety*” (p. 5). The way in which this is achieved is through the various interessement methods available to the actors, which allow them to destabilize any competing networks and convince all actors within the network to subscribe to their problem-solution proposal. Thus, when analyzing Planned Change through the lens of actor-network theory, it becomes possible to not only identify the type of change process being used, but also the methods used by the actors to initiate the change process and the consequences of those methods on the network in-situ. It becomes possible to trace the change as one traces the movements of the actors.

The second stage of Planned Change – move- is what I call the translation stage, the stage in which the network migrates from its in-situ state to the desired new state. This is the stage Callon (1986) defines as enrollment and Latour (2005a; 1983) calls redistributing the local. Once the actors in the network have been convinced of the need for change; they have accepted the problem-solution presented, they begin the movement from the in-situ state to the new state. In the case of ANT, this often involves the use of technological solution, which is often the case in Planned Change as well. The success of localizing the global in the first stage has convinced the other actors that should they migrate to the new setting, they too will be able to master the translation of macro to micro. Their problems will be solved if they accept the solution presented. What they also do is subject to the agency of the key actors in the equation; this could be management, technology, work processes, policies, and procedures. Thus the move stage requires one group of actors to submit to or to accept the agency of another set of actors within the network which allows for the argument that in order for Planned Change to be successful in progressing to and through the move stage, agency must be re-distributed between the actors within the social network. It is only when this re-distribution has taken place that the old situation has been successfully replaced by the new. This stage is where the Planned Change process encounters a level of uncertainty, as it has been shown that the re-distribution process is difficult to predict

(Czarniawska-Joerges & Sevón, 1996). In other words, the move stage cannot be planned. Rather, it becomes the responsibility of the key agency exerting actors to keep the network moving forward through this stage, but they cannot completely control how this redistribution process unfolds. It is only by guiding the process that they can ensure that the desired outcomes are achieved, regardless of the way in which the translation takes place. Using actor-network theory provides these actors with a method to trace the movements as they occur in order to gain a deeper insight into how this move stage unfolds. But, it does not provide a framework to control the movements of the other actors. Instead, it provides insights for key actors as to how to use the lever to move macro to micro to macro to continue to convince the others to stay on board as the movement takes place.

The last stage of Planned Change, re-freeze is connected to the final stages of actor-network theory; re-connecting the sites (Latour, 2005a) or as Callon (1986) defines it enrollment. It is at this point that the new social network has emerged from the move stage and needs to be crystalized. Here again we see the benefits of combining ANT with the Planned Change concept as the latter tells us about the what and the former about the how. Latour (2005a) argues that the translation is not complete until the new social construction created during the move stage has been stabilized through the establishment of connections. These connections hold the frame in place and provide the routes by which agency is deployed and disbursed through the network. Callon (1986) tells us that this is when not only do the other actors accept and subject to the problem-solution provided to them, but at this stage they also begin to use the solution and espouse its benefits of the solution to others. A spokesperson is identified to speak on behalf of the solution and the fragile alliances established during the first two stages are stabilized through these actions. In other words, the actors begin to act as is defined for them within the new framework. Thus, it is through performance that the new network is refrozen into its new construct. If the actors do not act in accordance with the new framework, then the translation is not complete and the change has not been successful in achieving the aims established at the start. In the situation of Planned Change this would

mean that the goals established at the start of the project have not been met. To further explore this final stage of the Planned Change the concept of performance within the actor-network must be explored is if it is through performance that the network is stabilized.

### **Summary and Conclusions**

In actor-network theory, the actor(s) who successfully interest the other actors and convince them to move through the stages of translation (Callon, 1986; Callon & Law, 1988; Latour, 2005a) is/are the powerful actor(s) exerting agency over the network itself. The usefulness of ANT as a socio-technical approach, breaking down the barrier between human and non-human, makes it a useful 'method' to apply to interactions between people and systems. This has been demonstrated through its wide use in accounting and IT literature. Furthermore, it creates the opportunity to identify all of the actors within a network and then trace their movements to examine how the network is formed and reformed by the different actors. In ANT an actor is only an actor if it is performing; hence this e makes it a useful way to examine the performativity of the actors and results or consequences of the performance on the network.

Now that I have a framework with which to map out and trace the actors as they move through the network, it is possible for me to trace those within my own experience. However, what I am still missing is the definition of my own role as the change agent, the actor who has initiated the change process. In order to sufficiently explore this role I must first further define what is meant by the title change agent, with specific reference to the concept of planned change within the actor network.

### **Section 3- Performativity and the Change Agent**

#### **Introduction**

When searching for literature about the change agent though not limiting my search only to these areas, I specifically looked for texts focusing on the role of internal change agents and where possible, auto/ethnographic accounts of their personal experiences. I was myself an internal change agent during the phenomenon studied and am writing an auto/ethnographic account of that experience. Thus, I am not seeking insight into the experiences of external change agents. Methodologically I am curious to see how others like me have presented their stories, which further reinforces the choices I've made, reminds me that I am not alone in my experiences and provides me with ideas for different ways to present my work. This section is split into two parts with the first examining the characteristics and skills needed by the internal change agent as defined in the literature. In the second section I explore the concept of performativity within the actor-network.

#### **Characteristics and Skills of the Change Agent**

*“Change agents are ultimately guided by what they attend to during diagnosis. Some change agents see everything in terms of personal and interpersonal dimensions, others see things in terms of technical and structural dimensions, and still others see things in terms of cultural dimensions. In all cases, the change agent is guided in his work by his particular set of assumptions and beliefs, although in many cases these are implicit and hidden” (Tichy & Nisberg, 1976).*

Research into the role of the change agent and her/his characteristics is not a recent area (Ottoway, 1983; Wylie, et al., 2011). Rather, the way in which change agents perform, similar to the concept of organizational change, has been widely examined in literature through the decades. In their work looking into change agent bias Tichy & Nisberg (1976) found a correlation between the categories applied during organizational diagnosis prior to change and the

intervention approaches used by the agent themselves from which they devised four different categories of change agents; Outside Pressure Type, People Change Technology Type, Analysis for the Top Type and Organizational Development Type (pp. 287-288). They continue to speculate that different personality characteristics identified by Jung or personal style is associated with the different change agent categories. The primary focus of the Outside Pressure Type is on changing the way the social systems (the organization) relates to the external environment and this type looks for ways to alter leadership and strategy during their interventions. The personality characteristic of this type is someone who is a senser; experiencing based on one's perceptions, assertive, pragmatic, get it done, perfectionist. The People Change Technology Types are primarily concerned with individual work performance and seek to improve the feelings people have about their jobs. These types are the feelers; loyal, deal with emotions and relate to situations through emotional experiences. The third type, Analysis for the Top are focused on improving organizational efficiency and effectiveness, often using technology and structural changes as the tools to achieve the goals of increasing productivity. This type falls under the category of the thinkers; rational, logical, analytical, prudent and objective. Finally the Organizational Development Types are focused on internal processes such as group dynamics, decision making and communication. These are the intuitor/feelers of the group; combining the characteristics of being imaginative, future oriented and creative with loyalty, emotional and able to relate.

Though these categories were devised in the 1970s, when combining them with the different typographies of organizational change, they provide a framework for examining the role of the change agent within the change management process, show in the table below.

**Table 3 – Typologies of Change, Change Agent Types & Personality Styles (adapted from Tichy & Nisberg (1976) and Boonstra (2004))**

Type of Change	Planned Change	Organization Development	Continuous Changing (and constructing realities)
Type of Change Agent	Analysis for Top	People Change Technology & Outside Pressure-	Organizational Development
Personality Style	Thinkers	Feelers & Sensors	Intuitors/Feelers

Defining the type of change helps to identify the focus of the change agent which then allows us to further focus on the methods used by the agent to generate change. Once the methods have been identified this gives us a tool to trace the movements of the agent as s/he performs within the network. However, though these categories are useful in providing a framework for identifying which type of change agent is needed or desired for the different types of organizational change, it does not provide insight into what happens when the type of change and change agent needed is different from the personal style of the change agent who is assigned to facilitate the change process. This approach also fails to explore the skills required by the change agent, which may be learned rather than inherent in the personality or personal style of the agent.

### **Characteristics and Skills of the Internal Change Agent**

*“The process of consulting, for an internal consultant, is not a clean or linear process, but rather is more organic and often messy”* (Barnes & Scott, 2012, p. 410).

Traditionally, when studying the concept of change agency, the focus has been on groups, such as consultants, who are situated outside of the organizations they seek to change (Wylie, et al., 2011; Ottoway, 1983; Sturdy, 1997). The role and importance of internal change agents when leading organizational change

has been under examined and is often overlooked (Pettigrew, 2003; Hartley, et al., 1997; Buono & Subbiah, 2014; Sturdy & Wright, 2011; Alfes, et al., 2010; Barnes & Scott, 2012). Though there is literature available about consultants acting as change agents, there is less information about those who stimulate or catalyze change from inside the organization itself. The literature that is available has produced a list of skills and core concepts (Wiesbord, 1987) that the ideal internal change agent should possess/embody rather than focusing on the performance and roles of the agents themselves. Porras and Robertson (1992) argue for the need for research that examines the role of change agents in their own organizational context as they [when working as an active client in partnership with external consultants] perform boundary spanning roles of gatekeeper, broker and partner (Hartley, et al., 1997; Sturdy & Wright, 2011). Pettigrew (2003) states that more needs to be known about how the internal change agent can be supported effectively, specifically when working in a multi-layered organization and questions whether good change agents are made or born. His view is that experience and support mechanisms such as coaching and action-oriented reflective learning can 'make' a good change agent. Erikson (2008) continues further on this thread by stating "There is no organizational change without individual change..."(p. 634) and citing Kouses and Posner (2002), states that the leader needs to model the behavior or change that he/she seeks to create. He (Eriksen, 2008) continues to argue that it is not possible for a leader to change in isolation, but that this occurs in relation to others and that it is only through reflexivity (in this case discourse) with other participants within the construct, that this can occur. Pettigrew (2003) supports this argument with his research by showing that the successful change agent needs the combined skills of a political entrepreneur and the reflective practitioner (Schon, 1983) while Ford & Ford (1995) argue that change agents produce change through different types of speech acts (Ford, 1999).

A successful internal change agent possesses the ideal attributes of being a heroic business athlete (Pettigrew, 2003; Spreitzer & Quinn, 1996; Buono & Subbiah, 2014; Kanter, 1989; Barnes & Scott, 2012), listed below as:

Skills: Observation, listening, negotiation, able to judge personalities and interest, influence decision makers/stakeholders/managers and others, facilitate learning, manage the pace of the change program, communicate effectively, inquiring

Personal Attributes: independent worker, humble self-confidence, high self-esteem, positive attitude about work, creative, influential, facilitative, leader

Abilities: deal with organizational politics, deal with key political agents and opinion formers, take risks, analyze and understand the environment, serve as mentor & role model, navigate underlying political and sociocultural dynamics, go beyond the technical merits of the change program, understand the organizational culture, people and their capabilities.

Furthermore, he/she should actively engage in self-reflection and practical reflexivity to learn about self during the process with little reliance on personal value systems. When responding to situations the change agent should engage reflection rather than automatic responses to situations. (Eriksen, 2008; Schon, 1983; Pettigrew, 2003; Spreitzer & Quinn, 1996). She/he needs to avoid self-sacrifice, be clear about what is to be achieved, listening and not acting and doing, increased self-consciousness about the process (Hartley, et al., 1997). Change agents can be or are seen as information sources about their field and/or context. The use of feedback and self-disclosure can enable change agents to uncover aspects about themselves and their field which were not previously accessible (Hartley, et al., 1997). This practical reflexivity disrupts and open up situations to multiple understandings (Eriksen, 2008), thus allowing for engagement with other participants in the change context. Learnings can be gained by talking about their experiences with others going through similar change processes.

The ability to navigate and lead organizational change: the change agent not only needs to possess the skills of a political entrepreneur and a reflective practitioner, but he/she also needs to have an established support structure



around her and be sufficiently detached from any power base so as to be beyond reproach for loyalty and objectivity (Pettigrew, 2003; Spreitzer & Quinn, 1996; Buono & Subbiah, 2014). He/she needs to be empowered with equivalent political status to effectively engage in political power play (Pettigrew, 2003; Spreitzer & Quinn, 1996). When confronted with managing the change process, the role of the change agent becomes one of making sense of the change dynamics as they emerge through their management of language, dialogue and identity (Spreitzer & Quinn, 1996; Ford & Ford, 1995; Ford, 1999; Weick & Quinn, 1999).

Research focused on the reflections of internal change agents reveals the challenges, risks and pitfalls faced when leading the change process.

*“...these [internal] change agents often experience a transitory, uncertain and fragile existence. Many internal consultancies experience ongoing concerns about their status, their ability to ‘add value’ and the nature of the work they are engaged in” (Wylie, et al., 2011, p. 2).*

Two key themes which emerged in a study of HR managers acting in the role of internal change agents were related to 1-establishing credibility & status and 2-the ability to add value (Wylie, et al., 2011). Furthermore, when acting in the combined role of the researcher as the change agent one can develop a sense of identity with the change process which can at times be unhealthy. Threats to progress can be taken personally giving rise to emotional responses (Pettigrew, 2003). In other words, the agent becomes the change and any criticism of the change process is felt as a personal attack on the agent him/herself. Further shared learnings of change agents revealed the following risks and awareness's: the agent needs to be careful not to take on too much, avoid self-sacrifice, limit the boundaries of the change process to keep it manageable, beware of evangelism, more consciously question interventions, and be realistic in what can be achieved (Hartley, et al., 1997). Several reflections of internal change agents revealed the experience of feeling isolated from the rest of the

organization (Hartley, et al., 1997) when leading a change process, discomfort with their own behaviors and values (Eriksen, 2008) in relation the change they were leading and a lack of control (Pettigrew, 2003) as the process unfolded differently than he/she wanted or intended. Thus, it is important for the agent to be self-aware of his/her own role within the change process and the boundaries and limitations of that role when leading organizational change. To direct or redirect change is to be sensitive to discourse and how dialogue enables groups to create shared sets of meanings (Spreitzer & Quinn, 1996; Ford & Ford, 1995; Ford, 1999).

### **Performativity within the actor-network as a change agent**

There have been many contributions to the theory of performativity including cultural studies (Nash, 2000; Thrift , 2000; Thrift, 2005; Thrift, 2007), science and technology studies (Callon, 2007; Latour, 2005b; Mol, 2002), speech act theory (Austin, 1961; Austin, 1962) and gender studies (Barad , 2003; Butler, 2010). The original meaning can be traced back to the work of Austin (1962) and his notion of "performative utterances" - verbal expressions which equate to what is being said (Czarniawska, 2011). Across the many instances of performativity theory the essential insight is that non-verbal forms of expression, language and speech are acting on and in the world (Bramming, et al., 2012). My take on performativity is inspired by actor-network theory and science and technology studies (Bramming, et al., 2012; Callon & Latour, 1981; Callon, 1998; Latour, 2005a; Latour, 2005b; Law, 1999). Though interesting, I have chosen not to explore performativity from the perspective of human geography in this study as I do not focus on space, spacing, intensity and affectivity (Thrift , 2000; Thrift, 2005; Thrift, 2007) nor the post-structural feminist perspectives on performativity (Barad , 2003; Butler, 1997; Butler, 2010).

Performativity within the actor-network is grounded in the performances of the actors as they pursue their own interests by engaging in transactions (Callon, 1986; Callon & Latour, 1981; Latour, 1986; Callon, 1991; Latour, 1988). In an examination of the laws of the economic markets, Callon (1998) examines the

performativity of economics in shaping the economy and argues it is through the movements or calculative transactions of agents [actor-worlds made up of webs of relations] within the market that the market is shaped. “*This means that the agent is neither immersed in the network nor framed by it... Both agent and network are, in a sense, two sides of the same coin*” (Callon, 1998, pp. 8-9). The consequence of this definition is that the actor does not exist without the network and the network does not exist without the actor (Law, 1999). The reality for the actor is done and enacted through her performance and the ‘*various performances of an object may collaborate and even depend on one another*’ (Mol, 1999, p. 83). For a change agent, this means that her performances are ineradicably linked with the performances of the other actors around her as they re-frame (Tsoukas & Chia, 2002) and make sense (Orlikowski & Hofman, 1997) of the change process she is leading, which also serves to define the context of the network in which she finds herself. Through the translation of global to local and then back to global (Latour, 1983; Callon & Latour, 1981), it is the performances of the agent wherein she creates the relationships necessary to render the new state of being durable, that establish both her position within the network and the boundaries of the network itself. As the agent performs, she is defining both the network and her role within that network. This is where the boundaries of the roles of the internal change agent can become blurred [for her] and the role of reflexivity when leading change re-emerges. If the agent is defining both the network and herself, it becomes easy for the agent to fall into the trap of feeling like she is the change (Pettigrew, 2003) as both forms of change for the agent are occurring simultaneously and are interdependent upon each other. Furthermore, if her performances are creating new roles or identities one has to question what happens to the old roles/identities. Where do these roles fit in the new network and if they are not performing, do they still exist? And, how is the agent made aware that there are new roles, new identities or new selves being developed when she is leading the translation process? Is this actually solved by using reflexivity as some authors have argued, or is there another method required? These questions are the ones which are raised in this section, but are not answered in the existing literature.

## **Summary**

In this section I have examined the concept of performativity for the change agent within the actor network. By applying the tenants of ANT to the movements made by the change agent when leading change, further insight is gained into how the agent brings change about and the effects of her performances on both the network and self. However, the section ends with a series of questions being raised about how the agent experiences this process, her awareness of the development of new roles and what happens to her previous roles as the change process proceeds. These questions are not answered in the literature, identifying the gap which I seek to fill with this study.

## **Chapter Summary**

What is shown through this exploration of the literature is that there is insufficient focus on the translation process in the field of organizational change with a focus on the change agent performing within the actor network. When tasked with initiating, leading and implementing a planned change process, this actor is asked to remove her/him-self from the existing social network, develop a new set of alliances, and use those alliances to exert agency over the network in situ. This triggers the “un-freezing” of the old network. However, in doing so, s/he has also broken down the network to which s/he once belonged. As is shown in the text, this leads to a feeling of disassociation or disconnection with the network [as it no longer exists]. However, this is not an area which is further examined beyond the management speak of making sure to provide upper managerial support for change agents or a type of support group where they can discuss their experiences. In the ANT literature there is no examination of the human actor within the network; the focus is on the network itself and the complex dance between the human and non-human actors resulting in new social constructions. However, there is no attention given to what happens to the actors themselves as they are engaged in this translation process, specifically related to the actors who lead the translation or change. In the change management literature it is assumed that change occurs because of a

trigger, some type of event which initiates the change process. However, it does not examine the translation process in sufficient depth to provide the answer to the question posed at the beginning of this thesis. Therefore, in the next chapter, methodology, I will explain the methods used to gather the empirical data required to answer the question, How is the change agent affected by the experience of leading change? The next chapter, methodology, presents the methodology and methods used to gather the empirical data used in this study.

## Chapter 3 Methodology and Theoretical Perspective

### Introduction

The starting point of the methodology in this research differs from the ending point. As the study evolved during its 4 year timeframe, my role(s) within the research and unit of investigation also evolved, stimulating me to look beyond the boundaries of my original methodology. I began by using a single, embedded longitudinal case study utilizing qualitative data collection methods and ended with an auto/ethnographic research coupled with actor-network theory. My research questions were reduced from 5 to 1 and my writing style transitioned as I made the step from a positivistic reporting voice to an auto/ethnographic voice, employing thick description and personal vignettes. Using pieces written during different phases in the study, the sections in this chapter illustrate HOW the transition in methodology occurred, WHAT choices were made and WHY those choices were made.

### My Methodology Journey

*I began the [DBA] program in 2008 when I had completed my graduate studies and was in the first year of establishing my life in a new country. This presented many practical challenges as I dealt with change on all levels of life related to employment, immigration, housing, language, culture and education. On all fronts, everything in my life was new, complex and required a significant investment in time and energy. The consequence of these many concurrent changes was that the DBA became an exercise I was trying to survive rather than something I enjoyed. I felt uncomfortable and insecure with my DBA peers, my advisors and the material as I struggled to balance the demands of my personal situation while continuing with the program. (DBA Review form- Progress Update- February 2014)*

I originally enrolled for the Bradford DBA program in 2008 with the intention to focus on the relationship between marketing and supply chain managers during the new product development process in order to increase the speed to market process for companies in the fast moving consumer goods (FMCG) sector.

This was based upon my working experience in the USA for a large FMCG firm. However, after completing my graduate program in The Netherlands I choose to remain abroad and not return to the company. This presented an issue of company access as I found it difficult to gain access to firms in The Netherlands as a foreigner. The jobs I was being recruited for were in the IT consulting sector, based upon my Business Systems Management experience. After the uncomfortable experience of writing my master thesis in the supply chain area I was also wary of embarking upon another research project in the same area. Therefore, in early 2009 I changed the focus of my study to look at the influence of communication technology on organizations, which was related to my job role; at that time I was working as an IT consultant for a small Dutch firm. I hadn't yet decided upon which area to focus, but after being paired up with a supervisor who focused on IT in the public sector; I began to narrow my scope to look at the role of IT systems in organizations. During the second year of the DBA, 2009-2010, I changed jobs, as described in the introduction, and took on the role of Demand/Pricing Manager at the company which ultimately became the setting in which this research was conducted.

*At this time I was also struggling with the research methods I had chosen, being more of a quantitative nature, when those are not suited to my strengths. Based on my master thesis experience, this is what I thought I needed to do and attempted to force myself to execute my research in a way that I was uncomfortable with. My supervisors saw this discomfort clearly in the work I was producing and I was given feedback about this. However, I persisted in forcing myself to write in a way which was not natural, and my work continued to suffer.*

*The result of this discomfort was for me to regress into myself and disconnect from the support system provided by the DBA. I began to dread having contact with my supervisors and peers at the PRW sessions. Each session and meeting resulted in me feeling more insecure and inadequate in my skills and self as a researcher. To counter this feeling, I put on a brave face and played the part of the confident manager, one which I have been well trained to perform. I*

*would assume this role for PRWs, contact with DBA peers and my supervisors. I would survive the sessions and as quickly as possible disengage from the people once again. So long as I kept people at arms-length, I was safe, they wouldn't know how terrible I felt and couldn't scorn my inadequacies. Conversely, they couldn't help me either, which is why these persons and the system exist. However, even though I'm sure it was obvious to all around me that I was struggling I would not accept nor ask for help. Like a stubborn child I pushed forward, further into what I had described to someone as "the hell of my own creation". (DBA Review form- Progress Update- February 2014)*

When deciding to pursue a graduate degree in 2007 I choose to look beyond my own borders and enroll in an international program in The Netherlands. I quit my job at a large multi-national, packed up my home and moved abroad to begin a new live in Holland as a student. Upon beginning my graduate studies in September of 2007, after approximately 8 years of working as a manager in US based multi-national companies it was assumed from the start that I would write a thesis focusing on supply chain management and, based on my professional experiences, that it would be of a high standard. Though I performed well during my graduate experience, I struggled with the course in research methodology. Coming from an American corporate environment where the focus was on getting the job done, I found the need to explain in finite detail how and why I would perform various tasks to "get the job done" to be frustrating and frankly, a waste of time. I had achieved success in the workplace by being able to solve problems without using methodology, so why did I need to use it now. Hence, when it came to the task of writing my master thesis, I struggled. I hated being forced to use theories to explain situations which I knew from experience, were not as simple as the theory purported them to be. I found the methodological language to be unnecessarily difficult and hence, did not afford it the time and energy it required. The result was a painful thesis writing process which I finally completed, with a moderate result. Ironically, after such an experience I still choose to pursue a doctorate and began this research.



Once I had settled into my role at the new company, as is described in the introduction chapter and indicated above, I recognized that the IT implementation I had been tasked with leading also corresponded with my research interests; to look at the role of IT systems in organizations. The combination was convenient as I would be able to combine my daily work with my research. Harking back to my efficient and effective mindset, I was attempting to combine two tasks into one in order to maximize my own resource utilization. In colloquial terms, kill two birds with one stone. However, this combination created more challenges than I or my supervisors had anticipated.

As I became more involved in leading the IT project it consumed both my energy and my focus, leaving little over to dedicate to sorting out my research. Though I continued to attend DBA workshops and complete assignments, the quality of my work was poor and my supervisors were concerned. My first priority was keeping my boss happy and the DBA came somewhere far behind. When tasked with developing my research proposal, I fell into old habits from my graduate days of not wanting to use theory or methodology; rather I focused on getting the job done. In early 2011 I submitted an elective management report for the DBA in the form of a research proposal, for which I was failed and received severe critique for my lack of theoretical foundation and referencing. These challenges can be seen in the original set of research questions I presented in my research proposal.

*The formalization of authority through the use of ICT and its effect on intra-organizational relationships*

*MRQ:*

*What is the impact of the implementation of an ICT tool, for the purpose of managing pricing authorities, on the existing perceived power relationship between Marketing and Sales functions?*

*Research Questions:*

- 1. What are the existing pricing authorities between Marketing and Sales?*
- 2. What is the existing perceived power relationship between Marketing and Sales?*

3. *What is the intent of the ICT implementation?*
4. *What are the pricing authorities between marketing and Sales after the ICT implementation?*
5. *What are the perceived power relationships between Marketing and Sales after the ICT implementation?*

(Mini-Viva Presentation 2011)

Looking at these research questions now I see that they are better suited to a bachelor or master thesis in the applied sciences than a DBA study. They are focused on the specifics of the case itself rather than the phenomenon of how an IT implementation affects organizations. My intimate relationship with the project was limiting my ability to extrapolate the phenomenon to a higher meta-theoretical level; I was stuck in the paradigm of my role as the IT project leader and was unable to see beyond those boundaries.

Methodologically, my choices and argumentation were also weak, as is shown in an excerpt from my research proposal.

*A single, longitudinal, embedded case study design will be used to gather the necessary empirical data. The use of a single case allows for the ability to conduct a longitudinal study, gathering data from the same units of analysis over a period of time. An embedded case study design is one that involves multiple units of analysis contained within one case (Yin, 2009). An example of this is using company as the case while also giving attention to the various sub-organizations within the company; such as examining finance, customer services, and operations.*

*A single case is chosen to provide the framework in which to conduct a 3 yearlong study of the effects of an ICT implementation on the units of analysis over a period of time. Because the intent of the study is to focus on the intra-organizational relationships of two sub-organizations within a larger organization, an embedded design is deemed as appropriate. The units of analysis to be examined are the members of the marketing department and the members of the sales department, with specific focus on the relationship between the two departments.*

*Sources of evidence to be used are: Documentation (e-mail, company policies, project charters), Archival Records (organization charts, strategic tactics), Interviews (focused, semi-structured). Through the use of multiple evidence sources, the potential of data convergence will be created, achieving triangulation of the data. (Yin, 2009)*

*To increase the reliability of the case itself and the data collected, three tools are used: a case study protocol, a case study database and a chain of evidence. The use of these three tools in conjunction allows the ability to replicate the case.*

*(Research Proposal, 2011)*

Based upon the potential I displayed to sort out the issues with my methodology and theoretical framework my supervisors approved me to proceed with my study, but it was deemed an at risk project. I hadn't been dedicating adequate time and energy to my research and the result was a poorly developed project. The reasons for this are various, but the two which are relevant for the study are related to the discomfort I felt at the company as the project I was leading ran into resistance and the second was the discomfort I felt with my methodological choices. As my work colleagues began to respond to me differently, I became unhappy and withdrawn, which made it difficult to work on a project associated with those emotions. I didn't want to go to work to lead the project, let alone research it in my free time. Secondly, I had chosen for a methodology which didn't suit me as a researcher nor the phenomenon I was encountering. Rather than discuss this with my supervisors and peers, I hid my discomfort behind a mask of confident bravado and continued to produce low quality work. However, I knew that it was time that I got my act together or I wouldn't be able to proceed further in the program. I began discussing with my boyfriend (now my husband) whether or not I should quit working on my DBA and focus only on my job and personal life or if I should find a different job that would better suit my DBA ambitions. The situation I was in was not conducive to doing both and I needed to make a change. I ultimately choose to leave my job at the company and become a lecturer at a university of applied sciences. This choice would prove

to have a positive impact on me and my research, which I will further explain later in this chapter.

Using the feedback I had received from my supervisor on my research proposal, I made several revisions from September 2011- June 2012 to my research questions and eventually ended up with one;

*How does the use of Information Technology to formalize working practices affect existing intra-organizational relationships? (Writing as a researcher in 2011)*

I continued using the original methodology: *a single, embedded longitudinal case study conducted within one company over the span of three years. Arguing: that the nature of embedded case study research; allowing the researcher to examine a particular phenomenon within a bounded system using multiple units of analysis (Bryman & Bell, 2007; Creswell, 2007; Robson, 2002; Yin, 2009) was deemed appropriate for this particular investigation due to the exploratory nature of the question itself and the requirement to examine how practices between departments within one firm are impacted by an external force. Furthermore, the ability to examine one organization as it experienced the change in working practices due to pre-existing situation of me as an active employee in the firm (Cassel & Symon, 2004; Creswell, 2007) allowed for a purposeful sampling method to be utilized for data collection. (Writing as a researcher in 2010)*

During that same time frame I also continued with the process of data collection. When I terminated my employment in the company I was researching I made arrangements that allowed me to continue to have access to complete my research. I had conducted interviews in 2010 as a part of initial stages of the IT implementation and was able to return during two different time periods (October 2011 and February 2012) to conduct interviews with organizational members about the post-implementation experience of working with the IT system I had been investigating.

Upon reflection it is evident that the 3 phases of data collection also correspond to changes occurring within my research self as I moved through the stages of joining the company, leaving the company and gaining further physical and emotional distance as time progressed. As I continued to distance myself from the events which had occurred my research self performing the analysis changed, transitioning from a wanna-be positivist to an auto/ethnographer. In the following section I will briefly summarize these changes in me and my research self by presenting myself occupying 3 subject positions over time.

Interviews were conducted using a 3 phase approach to conform to the original longitudinal case study methodology. When I originally chose to use interviews I was functioning as my wanna-be positivist research self and felt that the use of semi-structured interviews that fulfilled my qualitative leanings while using a rigid timeline to interview candidates as time progressed would provide me with both the flexibility to gather more data while still achieving the quality required of a more quantitative style approach. The interviews provided the opportunity to gather a larger data set by using soft skills within a more rigid framework.

Purposeful sampling was used to select the first group of candidates based on their involvement in the annual price adjustment process in previous years. These candidates (Mark, Helen, Ingrid and Henry) were able to provide me with insight into the pricing management process as it had occurred before I joined the firm. The first three candidates had been responsible for leading the process in the past and Henry had been the IT manager who provided technical support for the process. The interviews were semi-structured, using a pre-determined set of questions to assist me in gathering information about how the process had been run in the past. My wanna-be positivist research self conducted the interviews as they were a part of the original research plan; a longitudinal case study. Each candidate was asked the same set of questions to ensure consistency in the process and create the framework for analysis later on. The interviews were audio recorded and I transcribed them myself in my office at the company. To analyze the interviews I cut the printed transcripts apart by question and visually grouped them together in a loose structure. Once I had sorted through them I entered the key findings into a spreadsheet

and used that to map out the process descriptively. It was not until later when writing up the findings chapter of this thesis that I revisited the spreadsheet and the original transcripts to help me trace the social network using the discourse provided by the actors.

The second round of interviews was conducted in October 2011. By this time I had left the firm and was in the very early stages of my transition from a wanna-be positivistic researcher to an auto/ethnographic researcher. These interviews were conducted by my 'in transition' self who recognized that the exclusion of myself from the study needed to be addressed but hadn't yet acknowledged that a full shift was needed. Hence, though I was beginning my transition, I was still using a positivistic style for collecting qualitative data. I continued to use a semi-structured interview format, using a template of questions that were asked to all participants. A total of 17 persons were interviewed, candidates being selected based upon their role in the pricing management process and use of the IT tool. A complete list of the interviewees can be found in Appendix 3. The interviews were audio recorded and transcribed by a transcription service. During pauses in the interviews and at the end of the day I would record my feelings and observations about what was happening at the company. It was during this visit that I first encountered my empty office with my name still on the door and my mottos still on the walls. Though I recorded this observation and the feelings it evoked, I had not yet transitioned far enough away from my wanna-be positivistic self to recognize its value. I had also become aware of how being back at the company affected me, which I again recorded but chose not to analyze. I was not yet ready to confront those latent emotions nor had my auto/ethnographic research self fully emerged to provide me with the skills to do so. When my audio transcripts arrived I found it difficult to read through some of them as they stirred painful memories and feelings of the events that had occurred. I sat in my home office crying as I attempted to work through them and make sense of the data. My transition had begun, but it was not yet complete. I clung to the positivistic wanna-be self as a way to protect me from facing the emotional pain that I felt. If I didn't analyze the data with relation to myself, then it couldn't hurt me.

The third round of interviews were conducted in February 2012, this time by my fully transitioning research self. I had been away from the company for approximately 6 months and was beginning to actively question my positivist approach as the data I was gathering was hinting at the need for a deeper investigation; there was more at play than just the change of working processes. The greater stimulus for questioning the approach was related to how I felt; I was changing as a researcher and more importantly, I recognized that I was changing. Rather than accepting that I felt discomfort when visiting the company and encountered painful memories when working with the data sets, I began to question why it was that I felt that way. I started to ask what was causing me to feel the way I was and how it would be possible for me to overcome those feelings or at least understand from where they came. I had switched from seeking to prove to seeking to understand. However, it was not until I tasked myself with writing up the first full draft of the thesis during the summer of 2012 that this transition became visible to others. It was in that draft that my auto/ethnographic self emerged from behind the shadow of the wanna-be positivist self and began to engage with the study. I began to use the interview data as a way to map the social network within the firm as told by the actants themselves. I was no longer reporting what they had said; I was listening to what they had said and analyzing it within the actor-network frame.

An example of my wanna-be positivist voice is shown in the following italicized section, an excerpt from a previous methodology writing. This voice, though no longer active, is an artefact of the first subject self. The in-between self, my transitional self is found interwoven through the thesis as different sections were written and re-written. The thesis as it is now is the voice of the third subject self, the auto/ethnographic researcher. It is this voice, that of the third subject self, which further explains how the thesis as it is now came to fruition.

*A total of 26 interviews were conducted with 17 participants. Some candidates were interviewed multiple times, up to a maximum of 3 times, based on their organizational roles and availability. A complete list of anonymized participants and interview dates can be found in Appendix 3.*

*All interviews were audio recorded and transcribed either by me in the case of the first round and a transcription service in the latter. Interviews were semi-structured to open, following a general theme and then evolving based upon the responses of the participant. At the start of each interview the participants were informed of their rights and asked to sign a consent form to comply with the ethical requirements for this study. A copy of the consent form can be found in Appendices 1&2. (Writing as a researcher in 2011-2012)*

Following case study procedures (Yin, 2009), I also collected company documents which were related to the IT implementation.

*The decision to implement the IT tool upon which this study is based occurred prior to my employment with the firm which made it necessary to utilize archival data and historical documents to trace the decision making process and events which led to the choice to implement. In discussions with the Director of Finance documents were validated for their validity and relevancy to the study. The historical documents provided were audit notes from the auditing firm, consultant reports, the Request for IT Services and the IT Project Charter. Documents generated during my employment and involvement with the project were also used which include meeting minutes and communications between the project executive and IT staff leading the technical implementation. I also used archival data is classified as the company hierarchy and organizational charts to provide the context for the phenomenon occurring. (Writing as a researcher in 2011-2012)*

*However, ...this is not a tale which ends in tragedy, there is a turning point. At the time of my Mini-Viva in 2011 I received the opportunity to leave corporate life and enter into an academic career. I became a lecturer at a University of the Applied Sciences in Sept 2011 and began teaching at the bachelor and graduate levels. I also took on the task of thesis supervision for both levels, which had an impact on how I began to look at my own research. I was able to start to see some of the challenges I was facing from a different perspective and understand*



*better what others were saying. However, I was still stubbornly sticking to my positivistic case study approach and not enjoying my DBA experience. I felt that my research was inadequate, that my topic wasn't interesting and was still feeling traumatized by the event that I was researching. Though I had big plans to write up the summer of 2012 but when I sat down to write I discovered that I had writers block and nothing happened. Once again I had failed.*(DBA Review form- Progress Update- February 2014)

Once I had gathered my data and began the process of writing up the final thesis in the summer and fall of 2012, I was confronted with the need to further develop the methodology from my research proposal into a complete methodology chapter and use that methodology to develop findings and theoretical insights. It was at this stage that my discomfort with the choices I had made became evident. The text I produced again lacked references, finesse and clear insight into what I had set out to achieve. While I normally enjoy the process of writing, I hated the process of writing the methodology and the dissertation itself. I felt stifled by the need to use a particular style of language and self-expression. When discussing my project with one of my colleagues during this timeframe he recommended that I look into ethnography to see if that might be better suited to what I was attempting to achieve and referred me to the book "Engineering Culture" written by Gideon Kunda (1992). I promptly borrowed the book from the Erasmus University library and discovered that there was another way to write. Kunda's (1992) text reads like a novel as he uses thick description to follow the organizational events occurring within a technology firm. It was the kind of book I would read for pleasure; not at all what I was expecting from an academic text. My colleague then lent me the book "Laboratory Life: The Construction of Scientific Facts" by Bruno Latour and Steve Woolgar (1979) and I once again saw the use of thick, descriptive text used to develop theoretical and philosophical arguments. I thought to myself; I can write like this, I like writing like this, I am going to write like this. Following the ethnography route, I decided to transition from the single, embedded, longitudinal case study into the domain of ethnography.

*One positive that did come out of the summer of 2012 was a friendship that I developed with a colleague who took an interest in my research. We are the same age, but he is a career academic having completed his PhD in 2005 and spent his career in a university setting. During the school year and summer holidays we met once a week and discussed my work. He recommended literature and confronted me with difficult questions about why I was insisting on working in a way which was not producing any pleasure or positive results. He then loaned me the book, "Laboratory Life" by Bruno Latour and Steve Woolgar. It was at this point that I began to see that there may be another way. After finishing Laboratory Life I proceeded to read more works by Latour, Callon, Law and Clegg and I began to see my study in a completely different way. This was when I made the decision to re-work my methodology, adopting an auto/ethnographic approach. It was time to be true to myself.(DBA Review form- Progress Update- February 2014)*

I made the choice to re-work my methodology without informing my original supervisor of the change and when it came time to submit the first draft version of my dissertation in December 2012, the methodological transition came as a surprise. During a feedback session in early 2013 I was critiqued for speaking too openly in the methodology section about the challenges I had faced in the study and was advised to adhere more closely to the positivist tradition. I advised to not write as descriptive but to follow a more traditional writing style, again adhering to the positivist tradition. I left feeling confused and disappointed. I had finally found a method which I felt comfortable with only to be told it didn't work. My supervisor did advise me to contact my second reader, who is an expert in qualitative methods. Though it took several months before we were in a room together, that meeting was the turning point for me as a researcher and for this study.

*Once I had made that transition my writers block cleared and I was able to work again. I did produce a draft of my thesis for December 2012, but it was very rough and raw, needing more thought and work. Supervisor 1 and I met in January 2013 to discuss the draft. During that meeting we*

*discussed that due to my switch in methodology it would be wise for me to work more closely with Supervisor 2 due to her expertise in the methods I had chosen. However, rather than contact her...right away.... I closed down for a few months, and left my DBA on the back burner.*

*I did attend the PRW in April 2013 which was run by Supervisor 2 and her colleague after a Qualitative Methods Workshop. I remember being terribly nervous and vulnerable about talking about the changes in my research....After I had shared with the group I recall Supervisor 2 saying to me, "you found your voice!" which was music to my ears. I left the PRW with a sense of relief that I was on the right path and for the first time, a sense of hope. Maybe I would be able to finish the DBA after all.*

*In the Fall of 2013 I again picked up my DBA and travelled to Bradford during my school holidays to spend 4 days working on my research and meet with Supervisor 2. The trip was a revelation, having a lot of alone time to think and reflect on my research and DBA journey. (DBA Review form- Progress Update- February 2014)*

### **The choice for Auto/ethnography**

*Company access, participation and data collection proceeded smoothly. I was able to gather a diverse variety of data and was confident that with the data, the answer to my question of WHY the company members had responded so violently to me during the IT implementation could be answered. However, once embarking upon my intended template analysis of the documents, interview transcripts, archival data, communications, I realized that the answers I was finding would not answer to my question. The reoccurring themes of resistance to change and poor leadership (or lack thereof) became quickly evident. These themes, while interesting, did not capture the essence of the question at hand, WHY had my own colleagues responded to me in a different way when I was leading the project, could not be answered. Hence, I needed*

*to find another approach to further deepen my understanding and get to the heart of the issue. (Writing as a researcher in 2011)*

Inside of the tool box which is a case study research strategy, ethnography is listed as one of the various methods which can be chosen (Hartley, 2004). In a traditional ethnographic study, the researcher positions herself inside of the system to be studied and participates in the system and possibly its activities to collect data (Brewer, 2004). Considering that I was an active member of the organization being investigated, this seemed to be the logical path to follow.

Two classifications of participant observer roles adopted by the ethnographer, Golds (1958) and Gans (1968) are examined by Bryman& Bell (2007). These roles are shown in the table below.

**Table 4 – Classifications of participant observer roles (adapted from Bryman& Bell, 2007)**

<b>Golds Classification (1958)</b>	<b>Gans Classification (1968)</b>
<u>Complete Participant</u> - identity not known to the members of the social setting, participant is fully functioning member of the social setting, is a covert observer (p.454)	<u>Total Participant</u> - “completely involved in a certain situation and has to resume a researcher stance one the situation has unfolded and write down notes.” (p., 456)
<u>Participant as observer</u> – same of the complete participant deviating only in that members are aware of the ethnographers status as a researcher. Researcher is engaged in the normal, daily activities of the social construct and is often employed by the organization.	<u>Researcher-Participant</u> – “ where ethnographer participates in a situation but is only semi-involved so she can function fully as a researcher in the course of the situation” (p.456)
<u>Observer as Participant</u> – researcher is mainly an interviewer, does some observation and little to no participation	
<u>Complete observer</u> - no interaction with the people.	<u>Total Researcher</u> - “observation without involvement in the situation.”(p.456)

The advantages of Gans’s classification, similar to Golds, shows that the types and degrees of involvement and detachment of the ethnographer, ie roles, change through the study. When applying the classifications of Golds (1958) to my own research relationship with the case company the following roles can be

distilled during the course of the study. I began the investigation a complete participant, and even to myself, my identity as a researcher was not yet known. Though I was already working on my DBA, I had not yet settled upon a case in which to conduct the study or the topic as it now stands. This was my role from November 2009 until January 2010. From January 2010- August 2011 I had identified the potential to use my own work experiences as the basis for this study and assumed the role of the participant observer, making it known to myself and the organization that I would be researching the IT implementation which forms the basis of the study. When I severed my professional ties with the company I then switched from participant observer to the role of observer participant. While I still maintained a relationship with the company, this was mainly as an interviewer, also making a few observations when I was on site to conduct interviews. This relationship lasted from August 2011-May 2012. From 2012 onwards I have had little to no interaction with people in the firm, thus taking the complete observer role.

While performing the various participant observer roles there are also various working roles for organizational ethnographers (Bryman & Bell, 2007, p. 456).

**Table 5-Three roles for organizational ethnographers (adapted from Bryman and Bell, 2007)**

<b>Ethnographer's Role</b>	<b>Consultant</b>	<b>Apprentice</b>	<b>Confidant</b>
<b>Characteristics</b>	Competent, knowledgeable, professional. A credible outsider who secures the trust of management. Exchange of access for knowledge or information, often in the form of a written report or verbal presentation.	Naïve, unthreatening, personable. A younger person who can make herself useful within the organization. Exchange of access for productive labor.	Mature, attentive, trustworthy. An impartial outsider who is able to listen to people's problems. Exchange of access for psychosocial support or therapy.

When applying this framework to the timeline of my study, it can be argued that not only did I assume different research roles, but that my working role within the firm also assumed varying forms. When I first began my tenure at the firm, I was functioning in the apprentice role, someone who was naïve and could

prove to be useful. This was revealed during my entrance interviews during my first days as a company member. This theme arises again in my first round of preliminary interviews for this study. Company members spent time telling me how they performed various activities and how they thought those procedures could/should be improved, by me. As the study progressed and my company role evolved, I began to take on the role of consultant. During the time of the IT implementation and there afterwards I had taken on the role of the IT system expert, and was addressed as so. This was shown during interviews when some people responded, 'you know the answer to that'. In the case of one particular interview, the participant asked me for technical knowledge of the tool after I had turned off the audio recorder. I was firmly embedded in my role of expert/consultant. I also had an intimate relationship with management, which guaranteed ongoing access to the research setting even after I had ended my professional relationship with the firm. The confidant role revealed itself during the final round of interviews when I had been outside of the firm for approximately 6 months. While I was still viewed as an expert on the IT tool, people also began to divulge other organizational information to me as an impartial outsider. This revealed itself during several interviews when participants chose to share company information only after the recording device had been turned off. I was no longer a functioning member of the firm, and therefore it was safe to divulge their opinions, secrets and so on.

Using this framework, in combination with the classifications elucidated by Golds, it can be seen that during the course of the research I assumed various roles. This is supported by Byrman& Bell (2007)when they state that “clearly these three organizational roles are overlapping and more than one may be adopted in a particular setting. There are also likely to change over time as the fieldwork progresses.” (p. 457)

*I was a step closer to including me and my role in the study. However, beyond identifying that my active participation in the firm allows for me to add ethnography to the case study strategy and that I had assumed different research roles, this still does not explain why my colleagues responded to me differently while I was performing my own job role. It*

*just forces me to admit that I was a part of the system rather than an outside observer. Remember, I am not trying to discover how they responded to my roles as an ethnographer; rather, it is the varying responses to me while I fulfilled different job roles which are under examination. By giving my active participation in the company a name we still have not uncovered what is necessary to allow me to answer the question of WHY. Thus, I needed to search further.(writing as researcher 2011)*

As I was conducting the study I recognized that there were hints of another force at play. Product management in particular had hinted several times at the fact that they, while not being formally responsible for particular aspects of pricing management, were the gatekeepers of various elements and held the whole process together. During the interviews it also became evident that my job role, Demand & Pricing Manager, had been created out of the recognition that someone had to have formal ownership of pricing management. I began to wonder if the reaction was related to my job role or possibly to the way I performed the role. This path of reasoning led me to the decision to, using the data I had already collected, and use my observations and reflections as the point of departure rather than supplemental data. When overlaying a method onto this approach I reached the conclusion that the research question itself required me to use myself as the subject of the research, which is auto/ethnography.

What I missed from the existing approach was the link to myself, my role and my experience as being both the researcher and a member of the phenomenon I wanted to investigate. It was this unique ability to be a member of the organization which allowed for the collection of rich, thick data. Yet, once I removed myself from the equation, the data became thin and hollow, losing the depth which made it of interest.

But what is/was so unique about me in this situation? Looking back to the different roles I assumed during the course of the fieldwork and apply this framework to the in company project, the answer reveals itself. As mentioned in

the introduction, I joined the company to fulfill a dual job role, the Demand & Pricing Manager. Right from the start, as is implied by the & in the title, I was expected to fulfill two roles in one. Half of my time was to be spent on demand management and the other half on pricing management. During my first 5-6 months it was expected that I would focus on the demand half and slowly take on more Pricing activities, the first of which was leading the IT implementation. Thus, without assuming any research role at all, I was already assuming another role or identity inside of the firm. Once I took on the role of the IT project lead, I had fully assumed a second role, the first being demand manager. At the point that I chose to use the IT project as the subject for my DBA research and use my own company as the case, I had assumed the third role, the researcher. It is this rare combination of roles and the overlap between professional roles and research roles which makes me as a subject a requirement in this study. Thus, the use of reflexive auto-ethnography provides the opportunity to use my own schizophrenia as the point of departure for examining the data collected. Then, surely, the reason(s) WHY the participants responded to me will reveal themselves.

### **My auto/ethnography**

Once I had reached the conclusion that I needed to use auto/ethnography, I began to search for other studies using the approach to both validate my choice and provide a roadmap of how I could utilize it. In her paper examining the experience of work identity by manager's experience of work at the NHS Mischenko (2005), drawing on the work of Denzin she states that her reason for finding auto/ethnography appealing is due to its ability to show how the personal struggles of an individual are linked to cultural and social meanings. Haynes (2011) states the use of auto/ethnography provides the ability to examine the self in relation of theory and self as other, thus providing a vehicle by which a social phenomenon can be examined through the examination of self. Chamberlayne et al, (2000) state that the use of auto/ethnographical approaches is growing and is being recognized as "a subjective or cultural turn in which personal and social meanings as bases of action gain greater prominence" (p. 1). Haynes (2011, p. 135) continues on to state that



“auto/ethnography encapsulates a personal, intuitive knowledge, deriving from a knowing subject situated in a specific social context.” These definitions provided me with both the justification for the choice to use auto/ethnography and the how of using my own story to tell that of a larger social phenomenon required further investigation.

In a review of existing auto/ethnography literature Doloriet and Sambrook (2012) examine how auto/ethnography can be used to give stories a voice which might otherwise remain silent and introduce three possibilities for organization auto/ethnography. In this work, they (2012) present 3 epistemological points of departure for an auto/ethnographic study: the first being evocative interpretivist through the writing emotional accounts (Ellis & Bochner, 1992); the second is positioned as analytic realism whereby the auto/ethnographic process is supported by an analytical framework (Anderson, 2006) and thirdly, a political radical approach wherein power conflicts and expressions of discursive power are examined (Moreira, 2007). They (Doloriet & Sambrook, 2012) openly state that these three positions are not necessarily independent of one another and may overlap, whereby it is possible for an auto/ethnography to include multiple positions. Upon examination of my own study in comparison with the three epistemological positions, I am not an exception to this statement. My writing style is evocative, emotional and at times, distressing as I explore the depths of my own journey. This fits with the first position, evocative interpretivist. However, the choice to utilize auto/ethnography in combination with other methods ; case study, interviews, document analysis, etc and follow an existing theoretical framework for the purpose of analysis, lends itself to the second position, analytic realism. In this situation the auto/ethnographer is required to “(1) complete member researcher status, (2) analytic reflexivity, (3) narrative visibility of the researcher’s self, (4) a dialogue with informants beyond the self and (5) a commitment to theoretical analysis.” (Anderson, 2006, p. 378) Although power as a concept does play a leading role in this study, I do not explicitly utilize texts to examine discourses of power, which negates the use of the third position.

The utilization of these two positions, evocative interpretivist and analytic realism, within one auto/ethnography is defined by Learmonth and Humphreys (2011) as double auto/ethnography, a position which they argue “seeks to be both evocative, and to have analytic engagement with ideas about identity.” (p.7) When examining my own research methods in combination with my personal style of self-expression, this is a natural fit.

### **Criticisms of auto/ethnography**

While the use of auto/ethnography in management studies is increasing, it is not an approach which is without criticism. In their review of auto/ethnographical literature Doloriet and Sambrook (2012) provide a comprehensive overview of the various arguments against auto/ethnography, even going so far as to state that it is “loathed by some”. (p.85) Dealmont (2007) describes it as being lazy and presents 6 objections to auto/ethnography “1. It cannot fight familiarity, 2. It cannot be published ethically, 3. It is experiential not analytic, 4. It focuses on the wrong side of the power divide, 5. It abrogates our duty to go out and collect data, 6. We are not interesting enough to be the subject matter of sociology” (p.3), Hammersley (2010) views it as unethical due to the use of taxpayer dollars to explore what he defines as art as opposed to actual social science. Further criticisms are related to the use of self as the object of focus and include those of Coffey (1999), calling auto/ethnography egotistical, Atkinson (1997) recalling it as a romantic construction and Sparkes (2000) who openly calls a colleague utilizing the approach as an “academic wank” (p. 212).

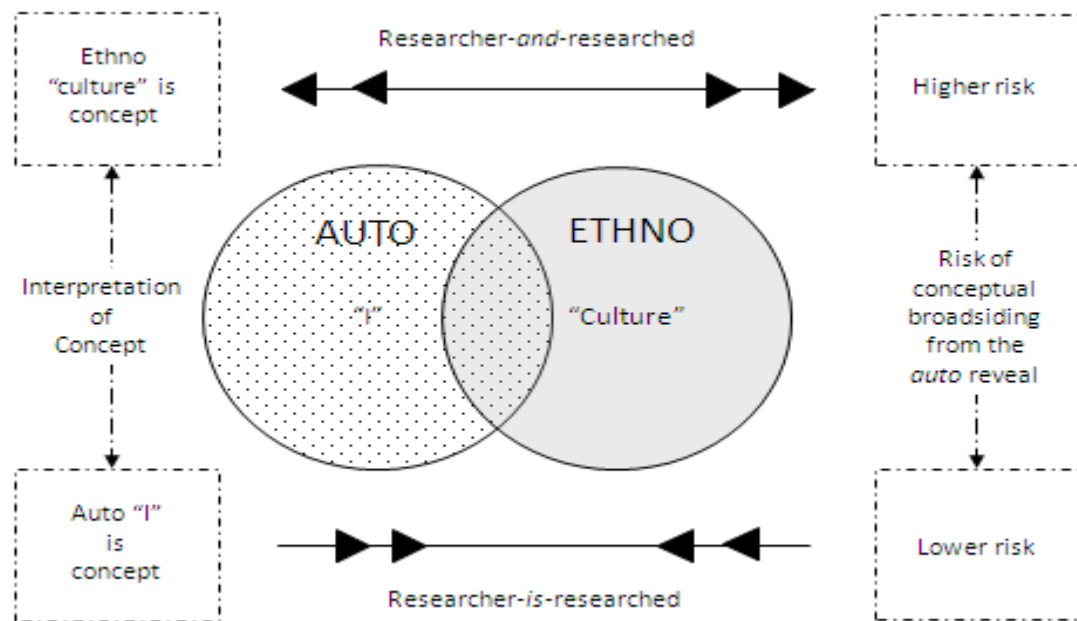
This concern about the focus or use of self is not unfounded as even in the context of the supporters of auto/ethnography, there is discussion about the pitfalls into which the researcher can fall. In a paper which examines the use of auto/ethnography for a PhD study, Doloriet and Sambrook (2009) examine the challenges faced when writing up and defending an auto/ethnographic account. Morse (2002) discourages students from using auto/ethnography out of concern for the risk of ‘conceptual broadsiding’, wherein the writer focuses on herself rather than the culture and research question. This concept of conceptual broadsiding is related to the way in which the auto/ethnographer utilizes her

examination of self within the study; either as researcher and researched or researcher is researched; also known as the auto reveal (Doloriert & Sambrook, 2009). In the auto-reveal the researcher uses a personal story, experience, reflection, vignette, poem, etc. (which serves as the revelation of self) as a way to engage the reader with the phenomenon being studied (Doloriert & Sambrook, 2009). In other words, the revelation of self provides the vehicle by which the social can be examined, viewed and or explained. The risk in the auto reveal, as is highlighted by Morse (2002) is where the writer's personal experience overtakes the focus of the study, thus shifting the focus away from the topic under investigation and onto the writer herself. Therefore, the choice of which elements (stories and critical moments) to reveal is critical to the success of an auto/ethnographic account. Grey (1998) argues that "reflexivity is more than the recognition of the subject-position of the researcher. It is also about recognition of the different meanings which may structure the understandings both of the research subjects and the readers of an account..." (p. 574).

To deal with this issue Behar (1996, p. 14) that the auto reveal should be "essential to the argument, not a decorative flourish, not exposure for its own sake."

It is against this backdrop that Doloriet and Sambrook (2009) present a theoretical framework of auto reveal for auto/ethnography.

**Figure 1- A theoretical framework of “auto”reveal for autoethnography (Doloriet and Sambrook, 2009)**



Through examination of this framework it becomes evident that the reason for using auto/ethnography and the risk of conceptual broadsiding are directly linked to the choice for using self; either using the researcher is researched wherein self is the concept being studied or the researcher and researched where by culture is the concept and self is used as a way of reflecting the greater culture or ethos. (Doloriet & Sambrook, 2009; Doloriet & Sambrook, 2012) In the case of my own study, I have chosen for the latter, researcher and researched, where in the examination of myself is utilized as a tool to further explore the social elements occurring around me rather than exploring myself as the central point of the study. This choice, following the theoretical framework of Doloriet and Sambrook (2009), increases the risk of conceptual broadsiding in my study.

I have dealt with the issue of conceptual broadsiding is through the use of multiple readers and reviewers of the study, the inclusion of supporting data as is described in the earlier section related to triangulation of data (use of

interviews, observations, communications, documents, archival data), participant validation and the utilization of a timeline of events to structure the timing of auto reveal elements of the study. Furthermore, through the use of actor-network theory, which is described in further depth in the following section, I provide a structured approach to how I explore the social elements occurring around me.

### **Reflexivity in auto/ethnography**

As is implied in the term auto, an auto/ethnographic account inherently implies and requires a deep level of reflexivity. However, the way in which one performs the reflection upon the self can take on various forms. I have identified the use of two forms of reflexivity in my research; the methodology chapter and textual guerilla warfare. (Perriton, 2001) The methodology chapter is of a more straightforward nature, taking the form of storytelling as I traveled through the study itself. I take the reader through my decision making process and explain my methodological choices. However, when conducting textual guerilla warfare there were many roads that would lead to Rome.

In his work *Margins of Philosophy* Derrida (1982) presents us with just that, a page which is split in two with main text residing to the left and his interpretative reflection of the text in the margin to the right. Drawing on the work of Derrida and Freud as her ontological frame, Ronai (1998) uses a layered account where she “teases out” (p.4) her relationship with an informant as well as reflects upon her multiple roles as a researcher and a striptease dancer. Textually this is accomplished by splitting the page into horizontal layers, thus splitting the story into different layers, or sections, which when layered upon one another provide the story as a whole. Also drawing on the work of Derrida, Rhodes (2000) presents the notion of pragmatic reading as introduced by (Cherryholmes, 1993) wherein the same story can be read from different perspectives, in this case feminist, critical and deconstructive. Looking back to the layered account provided by Ronai (1998), it could be argued that she does

the same, presenting multiple readings of the same story; without the pre-determined classifications, and using a different stylistic presentation.

This concept of the multi-layered/multi-story /multi-reading account is also used by Learmonth and Humphreys (2011) in their auto/ethnographic exploration of academic identity. They provide multiple accounts of the same event written over time, thus engaging with different versions of self. This introduces the concept of multiple selves into the plane of the multi-perspective story, thus raising the idea of reflexivity from one on process, to one on multiple roles, multiple perspectives to multiple selves within the time-space continuum. In other words, the act of the present self reflecting upon the self in situ, presented in a two dimensional text. They (Learmonth & Humphreys, 2011) approach this task by presenting their reflections on attending a conference next to each other on the page, hence first showing the two perspective approach of one phenomenon. They then at a later date, perform the same task, but this time using a past view, what they refer to as their Mr. Hyde, of the conference, thus layering the time element onto the same event.

Another approach to presenting a multi-layered reflexive account is used by Mischenko (2005) in her work on managerial identities. She presents her story in the form of a poem split into three sections; Pressure, Escape and The Return. As is implied in the titles of the three sections, the poem is time based, telling her story of being at work. Through the introduction of the poetry, Mischenko (2005) also introduces the concept of another self, or I, similar to that of Learmonth and Humphreys (2011). In their examination of the co-creation/ production process Orr and Bennett (2012) also employ a polyphonic reflexive account to present and analyze their dialogues as they worked together to construct and organize their collaborative research activities.

## **My Reflexivity**

### **Reflexivity in Management Research**

In her examination of the ways in which authors have incorporated reflexivity into management research, Perriton (2001) proposes that these methods can be categorized into five different typologies; seemingly accidental, benign, methodology chapter, textual guerilla warfare and socio-political. She proceeds to present a “rough guide to reflexivity” in which she identifies how the method can be identified, its benefits, its weaknesses, who may use it, the validity risks and examples.

**Table 6 - Typologies of reflexivity in management research (adapted based on Perriton 2001)**

How to Spot	Benefits	Weaknesses	Potential Users	Validity Risk Rating
<i>Seemingly Accidental-</i> Liberal use of 'scare' quotes. Culture specific references or puns, Subtle drawing of attention to construction points in the text; Occasional arch and ironic tone; Use of personal pronoun at key turns in the argument	Can be denied under harsh questioning.	Not taking the subject seriously if overdone. Ethnocentric, Being so subtle that it isn't recognized as reflexivity.	Confident writers. Qualitative researchers in general	Low. A relatively long-established textual approach.
<i>The Methodology Chapter-</i> Usually labelled quite clearly in a major research work. First person tales usually of selection of method and execution of field work under conditions of duress. Some candor in the confession of mistakes which do not affect the ultimate findings.	Implicitly encouraged in funded research where researchers are appraised partially on the grounds of whether they will make a 'good' researcher in the future. Familiar. Bounded within a part of the narrative and therefore not threatening.	Boring readers with 'first I did this and then I did that' accounts. Being sanitized versions of the 'real' process. Lack of insight into how choices affected the research outcomes.	Everyone	Low Always inherent in the research-in-exchange-for-qualification process.
<i>Benign-</i> Classification of self in terms of categories (typically) race, gender and class or occupation. Sentences that start "As a..."	Can be read as part for a strong commitment to the acknowledgement of positionality of researcher and partial nature of their claims. Appears sensitive to the need to be 'politically correct' in a diverse academic population. Low degree of self-disclosure.	Being a cliché. Stopping there. Playing at being politically correct without understanding the reason.	Researcher/practitioners. Researchers in investigating subjects connected to race, gender and class.	Low/Medium A well-established Feminist approach that needs little defending in that tradition.
<i>Textual Guerilla Warfare-</i> It looks different on the page- use of parallel texts, narrative collage, different fonts, poly-vocality. Use of different literary forms incorporated into the academic text e.g. poems, plays, fiction, multi-media, visual cues. Performative text.	Interesting and lively writing. Engaging for readers. Incorporation of wider variety of viewpoints and perspectives through different voices. Immediate challenge to understand the 'artificiality' of textual practices in all research accounts.	Fashionable, faddish and pretentious. Fiction not Fact. Self-absorbed, solipsism. Incorporation of different voices is no less manipulative than normal academic text- it just appears more academic (Ashmore, 1989)	Feminist researchers who believe in identity as performance. Researchers in reflexivity, social construction through language practices. Critical researchers	Low/Medium It is a relatively recent phenomenon ONLY if diverse textual practices are included alongside 'traditional' text. High/Extremely High- if alternative textual accounts are the only medium for delivery of the research account.
<i>Socio-Political-</i> Stated identification with a particular policy option. Classification of self in terms of groups which is perceived to be aligned with direct action. Committed to research which has a stated aim of changing the economic, legal or political status of the researched.	Engages the reader on intellectual, emotional and political levels. Seeks to bring about change in the community of the researched rather than studying it with no perceived benefit to the participants.	Judgment of 'catalytic' validity can only be conferred from within the political peer group.	Feminist researchers committed to positive intervention in women's lives. Politically active researchers.	Extremely High. One for those outside of the RAE panoptical...



Using the table shown above as a guide I classify the way I incorporated reflexivity into my account in two ways; the methodology chapter and using textual guerilla warfare. Reflexivity appears in all of the chapters of this thesis, but the methodology chapter conforms to the classification above in its use of the first person to tell the story of how I made the methodological choices that I did. The chapter includes confessions about mistakes made as I moved through the research process and adapted my approach as new learnings were made. Furthermore, this research has been conducted within a 'research-in-exchange-for-qualification process', in which this form of reflexivity is supported and encouraged.

The second way in which reflexivity is incorporated into the text is through the use of what Perriton (2001) calls textural guerrilla warfare. Just as it is classified in the table above, my thesis has been written using a variety of textual forms, giving it a different look on the page. I have used narrative texts, different fonts, performative texts, poetry and poly-vocality. The combination of these forms has allowed me to explore the concepts of identity and role performativity; which falls under the category of potential users. On the validity risk scale I have chosen to use the first approach, using the textual practices in combination with more traditional academic texts, which can also be classified as auto/ethnography using analytic realism supported by an analytical framework (Doloriert & Sambrook, 2012; Anderson, 2006).

*Though I had classified the types of reflexivity being used in this dissertation, I needed to decide on HOW I would perform the reflexivity. To deal with this dilemma I turned to other auto/ethnographic works for inspiration. (Reflective Journal, 2013)*

### **The concept of the multiplicity of self**

Drawing on the precedent set by Derrida (1983), Ronai (1998), Rhodes (2000), Learmonth and Humphreys (2011), Orr and Bennet (2012) and Mischenko

(2005) I have chosen to engage in my own form of textual guerilla warfare using the following tactics. Following the timeline of my research as a guide in Chapter 5 I present a multi-voiced account using reflective and poetic texts produced between the years of 2007-2014 to explore the following question: “How did the I doing the research come into being?”

### **The Inclusion of actor-network theory**

*Once I had applied auto/ethnography, while I did find a medium which allowed me to integrate my own reflections into the study to further enrich the data, I still did not find the answers. Rather, I discovered that I was deeply affected by what had occurred, but did not know why the events had unfolded the way they did. It was obvious that both my peers and I responded to each other differently depending on which role I was fulfilling. There were forces at play whose effects were seen and felt, but the forces themselves remained a mystery. (writing as a researcher in 2011)*

It was at this stage that I began to look back towards the foundations upon which this study was built, what was it that I had discovered so far and reflected upon what the missing link could be. It was at this point that I came to the realization that I needed a tool that would allow me insight into the hidden, unseen social construct which formed the foundations of the informal working practices that were being formalized. This construction would reveal itself in little glimpses every now and again, but it would happen so quickly and effortlessly that to the casual observer, the moments would be missed all together. An example of this is the description I provided of the lunch ritual in the introduction. I had observed and participated in this ritual countless times, and not attributed much value to it. However, when examining this ritual after collecting all of the data, it took on a new level of importance. The more I reflected upon it and observed it I realized that my study participants were, in this simple process, revealing their social network for all to see. It was then that I realised that I needed to follow the participants as they interacted with each other in order to reach understanding. If I was able to gain visibility into the

social network, maybe then I would be able to devise what it was that caused them to respond to me in such different ways.

A social construction or network is something which cannot be accessed by using the 5 senses (Latour, 2005). Thus, the question arises, how does one go about tackling this monumental task? I had already tried the use of priori codes derived from literature, using myself and the subject of research, what else was there? The answer revealed itself in the form of a book lent to me known as "Laboratory Life", written by Bruno Latour and Steve Woolgar in 1979. Upon reading their ethnographic account of a laboratory and argumentation that scientific facts are socially constructed I began to reflect upon the phenomenon occurring in my own study. I then read the work of Michel Callon examining the relationship between the scallops and fishermen of St Brieuc Bay (1986) I realized that I was not seeking the answer to why my peers responded to ME, it became a question of WHAT it was that I represented in my different roles and WHAT was it that they (my colleagues) were representing. If I could answer these two what questions, I would then answer my WHY question and therefore discover the answer to the question: *How is the change agent affected by the experience of leading change?*

I needed to discover or uncover WHAT the existing social relationships were. It was along this line of thought that I continued to delve into the works of Bruno Latour, John Law and Michel Callon. What emerged from this literary and philosophical journey was the realization that in order to discover what the relationships were I would need to make them visible. The way I choose to do this is through the application of actor-network theory as my data analysis and reporting technique. In the following section I provide an introduction to actor-network theory and describe how I use it as a method to analyze my data to map out the social and then trace the movements of the actors through the social landscape.

### **Actor-network theory**

To introduce actor-network theory I have chosen to follow the structure provided in the book “Reassembling the Social” by Bruno Latour (2005). The reasoning for this choice is derived from the introduction to the book.

*“What I want to do in the present work is to show why the social cannot be constructed as a kind of material or domain and to dispute the project of providing a ‘social explanation’ of some other state of affairs....What I want to do is to redefine the notion of social by going back to its original meaning and making it able to trace connections again...After having done extensive work on the ‘assemblages’ of nature, I believe it’s necessary to scrutinize more thoroughly the exact content of what is ‘assembled’ under the umbrella of a society.” (Latour, 2005, pp. 1-2)*

To achieve this goal, Latour (2005) presents his approach, the sociology of associations or actor-network theory, in two parts, Part 1: How to Deploy Controversies About the Social World and Part 2: How to Render Associations Traceable Again. Part one discusses the role of controversy and identifies 5 sources of uncertainty [No Group, Only Group Formation; Action is Overtaken; Objects too Have Agency; Matters of Fact vs. Matters of Concern; Writing Down Risky Accounts]. Part 2; How to Render Associations Traceable Again, describes how the flattening the social can be achieved in a series of actions which Latour (2005) defines as moves [ 1-Localizing the Global, 2- Redistributing the Local and 3- Connecting Sites]. I use the first section, Part 1 to introduce ANT. The second section, Part 2, is used to discuss the use of ANT as a method.

### **Actor-network theory an introduction**

Latour (2005) begins by identifying 5 sources of uncertainty in the social world; 1- No group, only group formation, 2- action is overtaken, 3- objects too have agency, 4- matters of fact vs. matters of concern and 5- writing down risky accounts. I will now examine each source of uncertainty individually.

The first source of uncertainty- No group, only group formation

*“The first source of uncertainty one should learn from is that there is no relevant group that can be said to make up social aggregates, not established component that can be used as an incontrovertible starting point.” (Latour, 2005, p. 29)*

This first source of uncertainty is grounded in the position that a group is not something which is a fixed entity or starting point for analysis. Rather, a group only exists when it is in movement/evolution/creation, jostling for position with other groups, identification of spokespersons and testing the boundaries set by those spokespersons. The role of the spokesperson encompasses the following activities.

A spokesperson defines who they (the group) are, what they should be and what they have been. This/these member(s) are at constant work, justifying the existence of the group, developing rules, measures and so on. The spokesperson defines what the ‘in’-formation group is in comparison to other competing groups (anti-groups) and develops measures to make the boundaries of their group able to withstand the pressures of the anti-groups, thus making those boundaries fixed and durable. When another spokesperson recognizes or pays attention to the group, this strengthens the durability of the group itself and gives it credibility. (Latour, 2005)

Once a spokesperson(s) are in action this does not yet determine that the collection of members can be identified as a group. Retracing back to the statement that there is no such thing as a group, only group formation this implies that action is a necessary element in the defining of a group. Latour (2005) defines this as performativity, in other words the action or work that is required in the forming, re-forming, un-forming of a group. If a group is not in a dynamic state, there is no group. This then raises the question of how can a group be “seen” as performing. This problem is solved by Latour (2005) through the identification of intermediaries and mediators. An intermediary is something which transports meaning or force without transformation. In other

words, the input defines the output. A mediator is something which transforms, translates, distorts, modifies, the meaning of the elements which they are meant to carry; input does not define output. These objects are a method used to produce the social and are of a performative nature. When they are no longer performing, they no longer exist.

In summary, the following positions are taken. Groups as a defined starting point do not exist. Rather, it is during the performative formation/re-formation state that a group can be identified. For a group to be formed a spokesperson defines who/what the group is/is not in comparison to anti-groups and defines rules or boundaries to deflect pressures from competing groups. The recognition of the group by another spokesperson makes the group durable and fixes the boundaries developed by the spokesperson(s). The vehicles by which group movement is performed are intermediaries and mediators; transporting or translating meanings. When these objects are not performing, they disappear.

The second source of uncertainty- Action is overtaken

*“An ‘actor’ in the hyphenated expression actor-network is not the source of an action but the moving target of a cast array of entities swarming toward it.” (Latour, 2005, p. 46)*

It is in this source of uncertainty where the term actor is introduced and the role of the actor is defined. Actors are engaged by others in group formation, re/deformation and engage in providing accounts to account for the actions of others and themselves. (Latour, 2005) The actor itself is not necessarily the source of action, rather the source of action remains uncertain. The actor is defined as what is made to act by many others. (Latour, 2005, p. 46) This leads to the question of how it is possible to know if an actor is acting and how to trace the source of the action. The solution to this dilemma is presented in the concept of agency.

*“Although we never know for sure who and what is making us act, we can define a list of features which are always present in contradictory arguments about what has happened: agencies are a part of an account; they are given a figure of some sort; they are opposed to other competing agencies; and, finally, they are accompanied by some explicit theory of action.”* (Latour, 2005, p. 52)

Agency is presented by the actors in the form of an account as doing something, acting, performing and has some kind of effect such as changing or transforming. (Latour, 2005) There must also exist another competing agency, against which the agency of the actor is in conflict, creating the contradiction or friction. By responding to this contra-agency, the actor performs and produces the controversy or action which makes the traces of the social visible. Latour (2005) refers to this as the requirement of the presence of the social to be demonstrated. If there is no performance, there is no social. The form or shape of the agency, or what is doing the action is also defined in the account, referred to by Latour (2005) as figuration. Thus, the actor provides the force which is making it act with defining features.

Another activity in which actors engage is the critique of other agencies; disenfranchising them to prove their illegitimacy against its own chosen agency (Latour, 2005). This allows the actor to justify the agency or agencies which make it to act as being correct, just, justifiable. Using this as a basis actors then *“propose their own theories of action to explain how agencies’ effects are carried over.”* (Latour, 2005, p. 57) The actors themselves self-diagnose what agencies are inducing their actions, how those agencies are making them perform and what the results are of those performances. For the social scientist, which in this case is the researcher, what is of importance to recognize is that it is not the figure which the agency possesses that is of importance, rather the range of mediators it is able to deploy and how that agency is acting. This leads to the discussion that Latour (2005) describes as ‘how to make someone do something’.

*“When a force manipulates another, it does not mean that it is a cause generating effects; it can also be an occasion for other things to start acting.” (Latour, 2005, p. 60)*

Thus, the identification of an actor, a mediator and the figure of agency is not enough to identify who, what and why an action is taking place. Rather, it identifies more points where mediators and intermediaries can be deployed to generate further action. This means that an account must take into consideration the possibility that agencies are deploying multiple mediators and intermediaries. The concreteness of account is generated by an increase in the share of mediators over intermediaries in the account itself. (Latour, 2005) This challenges the researcher to ask the following questions: “Which agencies are involved? Which figurations do they have? Which modes of action do they use? Are there causes and their intermediaries at work? Or is there a situation of concatenation of mediators at work?” Latour (2005) does not present answers to these questions, rather he warns the researcher to be aware of their existence. The implication is that there is a concatenation of mediators at work in place from a direct cause- intermediary-effect scenario.

The third source of uncertainty – Objects too have agency

*“For ANT, as we now understand, the definition of the term (social) is different: it doesn’t designate a domain of reality or some particular item, but rather is the name of a movement, a displacement, a transformation, a translation, an enrollment. It is an association between entities which are in no way recognizable as being social in the ordinary manner, except during the brief moment when they are reshuffled together.” (Latour, 2005, pp. 64-65)*

Latour (2005) argues that the main advantage for dissolving the concept of a social force and replacing it with an association, which is defined by its active element, makes it possible to identify what makes it durable and bring to the forefront the practical measures used to keep the ties in place and the costs for engaging in and sustaining an interaction. By breaking down the social into a



set of movements, this also breaks down the barrier between human and non-human, thus allowing for objects to become participants in the movement. This creates the situation where a thing, or anything, can be an actor with an actor being defined as anything which can modify a state of affairs, providing that it has figuration. If the thing which is doing the modification has no figuration, it is then referred to as an actant. (Latour, 2005) It is also relevant to note that objects can also be participants; having the ability to express power relations, symbolize social hierarchy, reinforce inequalities, transport power, objectify inequality and relay gender relations. *“Objects are nowhere to be said and everywhere to be felt”* (Latour, 2005, p. 72). Objects can also be shape-shifters; making the transition from being a mediator to an intermediary but they must produce traces for the observer to follow. It is up to the observer to make the object provide a description of itself, generate a script of what it is making others do, so that the effect it is having on other actors or agents can be seen. It is through the multiplicity of objects and the way in which power is transported by them which defines the quality of an ANT account. The way in which these objects transfer power from one agent to make others act should be visible. *“Follow the actors in their weaving through the things they have added to social skills so as to render more durable the constantly shifting interactions.”* (Latour, 2005, p. 68)

The fourth source of uncertainty- Matters of fact vs. matters of concern

In the first 3 sources of uncertainty groups are made, agencies are explored and objects are allowed to play a role. In the fourth source of uncertainty the debate turns to the discussion of constructionism vs. Social constructionism. Adoption of the social constructionist stance means that we make a choice to replace the existing reality with what Latour (2005) calls some other stuff, or the social; which is the place where it, being reality, is built. It is from this departure point that we delve further into ANT. It is at this point where Latour introduces the phrase, sociology of translation, as another name for actor-network theory. This forms the bridge to the work done by Michel Callon (1986) on the sociology of translation, as was discussed in the literature review.

### Translation vs. transportation

It is at this stage that some of the key elements included in an ANT account are brought to the forefront and various social movements are examined, explored and discussed. The mediator is again presented, re-defined as something which has a relation with others, relations in the way that they make others do (unexpected) things. The social is presented as something which can be of a circular movement which connects social and non-social things. Actors may be associated with each other in a way that they unwittingly make others do things through series of unexpected events. It begins to sound like a free for all, where events are occurring willy-nilly as the result of unexplainable or untraceable forces. Before the social forces get too out of control Latour (2005) introduces another element, the concept of translation- defined as a relation that does not have transport causality but induces 2 mediators into coexisting. It is through these translations between the mediators that may possibly generate associations which can be rendered traceable. By examining the translation, or the mediators engaged in the translation, it becomes possible to examine the event from multiple viewpoints. Latour (2005) argues that in an ANT account, there is no such thing as matters of fact, only matters of concern.

*“When we list the qualities of an ANT account, we will make sure that when agencies are introduced they are never presented simply as matters of fact but always matters of concern, with their mode of fabrication and stabilizing mechanisms clearly visible.”* (Latour, 2005, p. 120)

The challenge presented in working within the context of actor-network theory is that one must let go of any pre-disposed notion of what the social is and what it is not. There are no facts, no existing theories, no pre-set stage upon which the actors are acting. Rather the researcher must allow him/herself to disengage from what he/she has previously been taught, told or experienced of the social and allow each movement by the actors to be examined from multiple viewpoints rather than attaching it to a known theory. The way in which this form of objectivity is achieved is through the use of written accounts, making the

social visible by mapping the movements of the actors, actants, mediators and intermediaries as they move about the stage and engage in the transfer and translation of that invisible force, agency. This is what is discussed in the fifth and last source of uncertainty, the writing down risky accounts.

The fifth source of uncertainty- Writing down risky accounts

*“I would define a good account as one that traces a network. By this I mean a string of actions where each participant is treated as a full blown actor...A good ANT account is a narrative or a description or a proposition where all the actors do something and don't just sit there.”*  
(Latour, 2005, p. 128)

Latour (2005) begins this section by telling us what characteristics a good ANT account are; the inclusion of multiple actors, all of whom are performing is what allows the writer to make the social visible. Considering that a network is a concept rather than a physical entity, it is through the textual accounts that the movements of the actors and the traces they leave become tangible, allowing for the social to be made visible. However, Latour (2005) also provides a word of warning to the writer in the form of defining what makes for a bad ANT account. In a bad account there are a small number of actors who are presented as the causes for other events and those actors will not act. Those actors will be presented as a matter of fact without having actually performed. It is important to remember that if an actor is not performing; making a difference, then it is no longer an actor.

To achieve the goal of making the social visible the writer must engage in a thick, descriptive account which does not apply any critique or analysis of the events occurring. If the account requires explanation, then it is of poor quality. Latour (2005) once again reverts to the term a good account, stating that it should stimulate the reader to be on the edge of his/her seat, anxiously asking for more. In this definition of a good account he goes on to state that the author, using his/her own controversial agency in writing the account, will generate a

text wherein in the action of the participants (actors) will be assembled in a way that they can be collected together. It is possible and likely that the number of actors and objects will increase in an account as their agencies multiply and the numbers of controversies are mapped.

#### Collecting the 5 sources of uncertainty

The summation of these 5 sources of uncertainty may support the revealing of the following: What is the social made up of? What is acting when we are acting? What sort of groupings do we pertain to? What do we want? What kind of world are we ready to share? (Latour, 2005)

When comparing these questions to my own research, the logic behind my choice to use ANT as a method is able to be made clear. To answer the questions about why my colleagues were responding to me differently and identify what was influencing their behavior I first needed to draw a map of the existing social landscape. Using the first source of uncertainty I identify which groups were in existence, who the group spokespersons were, how they identified anti-groups and the methods they used to stabilize themselves against those others. Employing the second and third sources of uncertainty I identify the various actors, objects, actants, mediators and intermediaries existing in the network and how they were engaged with one another. By employing the final two sources of uncertainty I am able to identify the matters of concern in the social framework and use those movements to create a map of the social by writing a thick, descriptive account. The way in which I use this account to answer my research question is described in the next section.

#### **Actor-network theory as a method**

It is now time to progress to Part 2; How to Render Associations Traceable Again. Here Latour (2005) describes how the flattening the social can be achieved in a series of actions or moves defined as[ 1-Localizing the Global, 2- Redistributing the Local and 3- Connecting Sites]. It is through these movements that it is possible to make the actions described in the accounts traceable and thus, analyzable. It is thorough application of this series of

moves that I make trace the associations between the actors in my study. Following the same procedure from the section above, I first introduce the moves by summarizing the text of Latour and then describe how I use those moves in my study.

*The first move – localizing the global*

To take the global and make it local...to solve this challenge Latour (2005) advises to follow the path indicated by the process of translation, otherwise known as the sociology of translation. Introduced in the literature review the name is derived from the way in which participants in a network engage with one another. According to Clegg (1989) power is constructed, attributed and exacted through these interactions. The approach focuses on abandoning the traditional approach of inserting a priori interests or distinctions (Clegg, 1989) and focuses rather on the development or construction of networks by the actors themselves. By following the actors through a series of stages as they engage in the process of translation, it becomes possible to map out how actors organize or 'translate' events into resources, organization control networks, alliance, coalition, antagonism, interest and structure to achieve desired outcomes (Clegg, 1989).

Latour (2005) argues that by paving the route from one site to another with mediators, we will make visible the chains of actors which link the sites to each other. Once the landscape is flattened, it is possible to make each connection payable and the actors accountable, should they wish to influence other actors. It is through the use of mediators and intermediaries that the payments for interactions are transacted.

In my account, I use the sociology of translation as the roadmap by which the journey of the company through the IT implementation is mapped. I break down the different phases of the IT implementation project into the 4 phases of translation, which localizes the study and identifies the actors, actants, mediators, intermediaries involved in the study. This allows me to keep the

focus on the local and resist the urge to meta –level or globalize the interactions going on to a higher theoretical realm. Rather, I am able to focus on the connections and begin to trace the actors as they move, interact and engage with each other in the network. This leads to the second move, redistributing the local.

*The second move- redistributing the local*

*“How is the local itself being generated?”* (Latour, 2005, p. 192)

We now know that local interactions are being shaped by existing elements, but we do not yet know where or what the origin of those forces lies. The way in which we search to find the source is to create a frame for the local, to hold it in place. This is achieved through the examination of the various non-human actors which have been brought into the picture by the human actors. It is the presences of these objects which Latour (2005) calls articulators or localizers. It is by the presence of these objects, transported by human actors, and the way in which they are configured, that the local is made into a place and its frame is set. Thus, in an ANT account, the analyst must describe this frame in a way that the movements used to create it are visible. The movement undertaken by the various human actors to transport those non-human actors and the configuration in which they are set must be traceable. By tracing this local frame the analyst is able to identify the way in which the human actors are using these objects to transport meanings. These objects become vehicles through which the human actors transport individuality, subjectivity and personality. Latour (2005) assigns these objects the name of plug-ins, borrowing terminology from the IT sector. Once a plug-in has been downloaded, the user can view or activate something which they previously could not. The same concept applies to an ANT plug-in. Through the acquisition of a plug-in, such as a pass to the gym, the human actor can gain access to an environment which was previously inaccessible. A Plug-in does not have determinate power, but it can make someone do something.

Another element involved in redistributing the local is identifying where the local is connected back to the global. While we are focused on examining the local, one cannot forget that the local only exists due to its relation to the global. By identifying where these attachments are it is then possible to trace the way in which the global is making the local act.

*“So, an actor-network is what is made to act by a large star-shaped web of mediators flowing in and out of it. It is made to exist by its many ties: attachments are first, actors are second.”* (Latour, 2005, p. 217)

The way I deal with the need to redistribute the local is to firstly map the configuration of the non-human actors to create the frame of the local. I connect those objects to the actors who transported them and trace the movements used to bring them to identify what that plug-in is being used to transport. Once those ties are clear I then identify where connections between the local and the global exist and explore how the global is making the local act. This sets the stage for the final move, connecting the sites.

The third move- connecting the sites

*“IF the analyst takes upon herself to decide in advance and a priori the scheme in which all the actors are embedded, then most of the work they have to do to establish connections will simply vanish from view.”* (Latour, 2005, p. 220)

The way in which connections between the sites or actors are laid is to quite literally follow the actors as they move through the network. If the analyst has performed his or her task in producing an account which flattens the social into something like a monopoly board; achieved through the identification of the actors, actants, mediators, intermediaries, plug-ins and connections between the local and the global, then he or she should be able to follow the movements of the actors as they engage in transactions with each other to move about the board. It is at this stage that the analyst must let go of preconceived notions of

what he/she, literature or theory thinks is occurring and frees themselves to 'listen' to what the actors are telling them.

The way in which I deal with this requirement is not to use priori coding for my data. Through the use of deep, descriptive accounts and adherence to the protocols described in the previous sections about what actor-network theory is, I map the social in a way that it produces what I metaphorically call a monopoly board. Using that board I then, through the texts, follow the actors as they engage with each other in various transactions. This then makes it possible for me to identify the vehicles used to transfer power between the actors and the payments made. Once I have identified these elements it is possible to answer my research question.

### **Quality Criteria**

Due to the qualitative nature of this study, the following quality criteria apply to the methods used. For each criterion I provide a brief definition of the criteria which forms the basis for the description of how I have addressed this issue.

***Transferability*** -My prolonged engagement with the phenomenon being studied combined with my role in the organization generated credibility. This combined with use of a "thick description" (Lincoln & Guba, 1985; Bryman & Bell, 2007; Creswell, 2007) generates the ability for others to use this information to judge whether the findings can be transferred to another environment. The choice use auto/ethnography and actor-network theory forces the generation of thick descriptions, thus fulfilling this requirement.

***Dependability***—This particular element, as argued by Lincoln & Guba (1985), requires the researcher to adopt an auditable approach. In other words, detailed records of the entire research process must be kept and an external party should serve in the role of an auditor, reviewing these records to validate that proper procedures have been followed. Through the use of a case study database in the beginning stages of the study (Yin, 2009), continuous peer review and debriefing (Creswell, 2007; Lincoln & Guba, 1985) with supervisors



and peers during the Bradford PRW structure, member checking with study participants (Creswell, 2007; Lincoln & Guba, 1985) during the study, and the use of the Bradford University Code of Ethics the dependability of the study has been conferred.

**Confirmability**—It is in this element where the use of actor-network theory as the tool for data reporting and analysis in an auto-ethnographic study truly shows its merits. A thick, descriptive account of the movement of the actors and objects through the network is required. By tracing the actors and objects through the network, objectivity is attained as there is no other way to generate a deep, descriptive account (Cassel & Symon, 2004; Creswell, 2007; Lincoln & Guba, 1985). The second element which serves to strengthen this study's claim to conformability is the use of interviews to corroborate or disprove the interpretations of the author. This use of multiple data sets; interviews, observations, reflective journal, company documents; increases the internal validity, but also provides another view of the phenomenon revealed (Creswell, 2007; Lincoln & Guba, 1985). It is up to the reader to distill their own interpretations of what has occurred based upon the thick descriptions provided in the report. A colleague external to the research has reviewed the research product to check whether or not the findings and conclusions are supported by the data (Creswell, 2007; Lincoln & Guba, 1985).

**Authenticity & Fairness**—The authenticity of the research is grounded in its auto/ethnographic nature and the use of multiple data sets (Creswell, 2007; Lincoln & Guba, 1985). Tracing my own experiences within the firm studied and contrasting that against the perspectives given by other participants during their interviews allowed for different viewpoints and perspectives to be shown. By examining myself as an object of the research, I also provide insight into my own experience as the research progressed.

### **Ethical Implications**

The Bradford University Board of ethics committee has granted ethical approval at the commencement of this study. Through the duration of the study the code

of ethics in research of the British Sociological Association has been followed. All participants have given explicit written consent to take part in the study and are fully aware of their rights. Examples of the Maple Beech Company and Individual Consent forms can be found in Appendices 1&2.

### **Time Frame**

This project was conducted from November 2009 until April 2014. As is indicated in previous sections, data pre-dating the start of the official interview stage is used to trace events which occurred previous to my involvement with the firm. Preliminary data collection took place from November 2009-June 2011. From June 2011 until December 2012 additional data collection took place in the form of interviews and collection of additional secondary data sources. Data analysis and writing up of the findings occurred from December 2012 until December 2014 and the finalization of the discussion and conclusion chapters took place until February 2015.

### **Chapter Summary**

Using an auto/ethnographic voice I have described the journey that this research and I as the researcher have taken from the realm of a single, longitudinal case study through ethnography into auto/ethnography and actor-network theory. I present the choices I have made and provide justification for those choices. I explore the risks associated with the methodological choices and describe how I have dealt with those risks. The reader is introduced to ANT in the form a summary of the text of "Reassembling the Social" by Bruno Latour (Latour, 2005) which provides the framework for how I use the concept in my own study. The chapter concludes with a presentation of the timeframe of the study which leads to the next chapter where the findings of the study are presented in the form of a thick, descriptive text organized using the sociology of translation.

## Chapter 4 Findings & Analysis

### Introduction

*“A sociotechnical scenario is a plausible proposal for a revised network of both social and technical roles that does not rest on an a priori distinction between human beings and machines.” (Callon & Law, 1988, p. 287)*

To describe and analyze the events which have occurred in Aspen I use the sociology of translation concept as defined by Michel Callon (1986) and the project timeline to trace the movements and interaction of the actors within the network through the stages of problematization, interessement, enrollment and mobilization. One of the premises upon which Actor Network Theory is built is the elimination of human/non-human boundaries for actors. (Callon, 1986; Callon & Law, 1988; Law, 1986; Lee & Brown, 1994) An actor can be any entity that is exerting agency or interacting with other actors (Latour, 1986; Latour, 2005). This makes the theory applicable for use in the analysis of sociotechnical accounts (Tatnall, 2002) and allows for the ability to trace any actor through the various strategies of translation. Callon (1986) also refers to this as the principle of free association, or “the abandonment of all a priori distinctions between the natural and the social”(p.197).

By acknowledging that there is that there is no priori distinction between the human and non-human (Latour, 2005), I join the ranks of those who have bridged the divide between social and technical; resulting in the production of a sociotechnical account (Callon & Law, 1988; Brown & Middleton, 2005; Tatnall & Burgess, 2002).

### A Sociotechnical Account

To use the sociology of translation or Actor Network Theory, I must first identify the network and the actor(s) I will use to follow through the network. I

accomplish this by describing and reflecting upon my own experiences of working at Aspen. I then trace the actors and myself as we migrate through the 4 stages of translation (Callon, 1986); problematisation, interessement, enrolment and mobilization during the IT implementation. Based upon the translation process I follow the use of Actor Network Theory as a sociotechnical account (Tatnall, 2002) to further explore the phenomenon occurring in Aspen. Actors appear, disappear and reappear through the exploration of the account, based upon whether or not they are performing (Callon, 1986; Latour, 1986; Latour, 2005). An actor who is not performing does not possess power (Callon, 1986; Latour, 1986; Law, 1986; Latour, 2005) and therefore is no longer an actor. There was a re-organization in the company during the course of the study, resulting in several of the actors either choosing to leave the firm or being made redundant.

Following my methodological choice to use textual guerilla warfare (Perriton, 2001); within the text there are several forms of reflection and analysis presented. Italicized texts are excerpts from my reflective journal, used to further describe events that had occurred. Text boxes are used to delineate where actor-network theory is used to analyze the different situations described in regular font. The analysis is presented in the voice of Nicole the researcher, and focuses on applying Actor Network Theory to the descriptive text. When applicable, quotes from the interviews conducted are presented in small text bubbles within the text to enrich and bring to life the descriptive data with different perspectives. Similar to the 3 phased methodology used to collect and analyze data, the different textual presentations provide the reader with a multi layered, polyphonic style account that when fully assembled paints a complete picture of the events that occurred and analysis thereof. This approach invites and challenges the reader to combine the various perspectives to create for her/himself one harmonious discourse.

### **Company Introduction**

The Aspen Company is active in the specialty goods market; producing and selling its products to a global customer base. The company has offices and manufacturing sites located in North America, Europe, Asia and South America. When the study was initiated the company was known by a different name and was a wholly owned subsidiary of an international conglomerate. During year two of this investigation the company was acquired by a venture capital firm which changed the company name and engaged in an aggressive growth strategy supported by acquisition; purchasing and integrating additional firms into Aspen to increase the brand portfolio, market presence and manufacturing capability. It is relevant to note that these changes have occurred after the IT implementation examined during this study but did occur during the research timeline. For the purpose of this study, it is only the European Organization which is examined, specifically the EMEA headquarters. The other sites were not directly involved with the IT implementation under examination.

The history of Aspen can be traced back to two separate North American firms founded in the late 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> centuries, which will be called Maple and Beech. Both were dedicated to the production of high quality materials; Maple- for use in the manufacture of further products, making them an OEM (original equipment manufacturer- a firm which produces and sells products to another producer as opposed to a consumer) and Beech -for use in testing application, sold as a complete end product. Both firms established an image based on the quality and performance of their products and in the mid-1990s these two firms were merged to form the first instance of Maple Beech; a global company comprised of two established brands to sell into four distinct markets. The company relied on the established equity of the two brands to secure its position in the marketplace. The company organized itself into four different business units to address the above mentioned markets. The origins of these divisions could be traced back to the root of the two parent firms; two units dedicated to the sale of Maple products to the OEM market and two units dedicated to the sales of Beech products to end users.

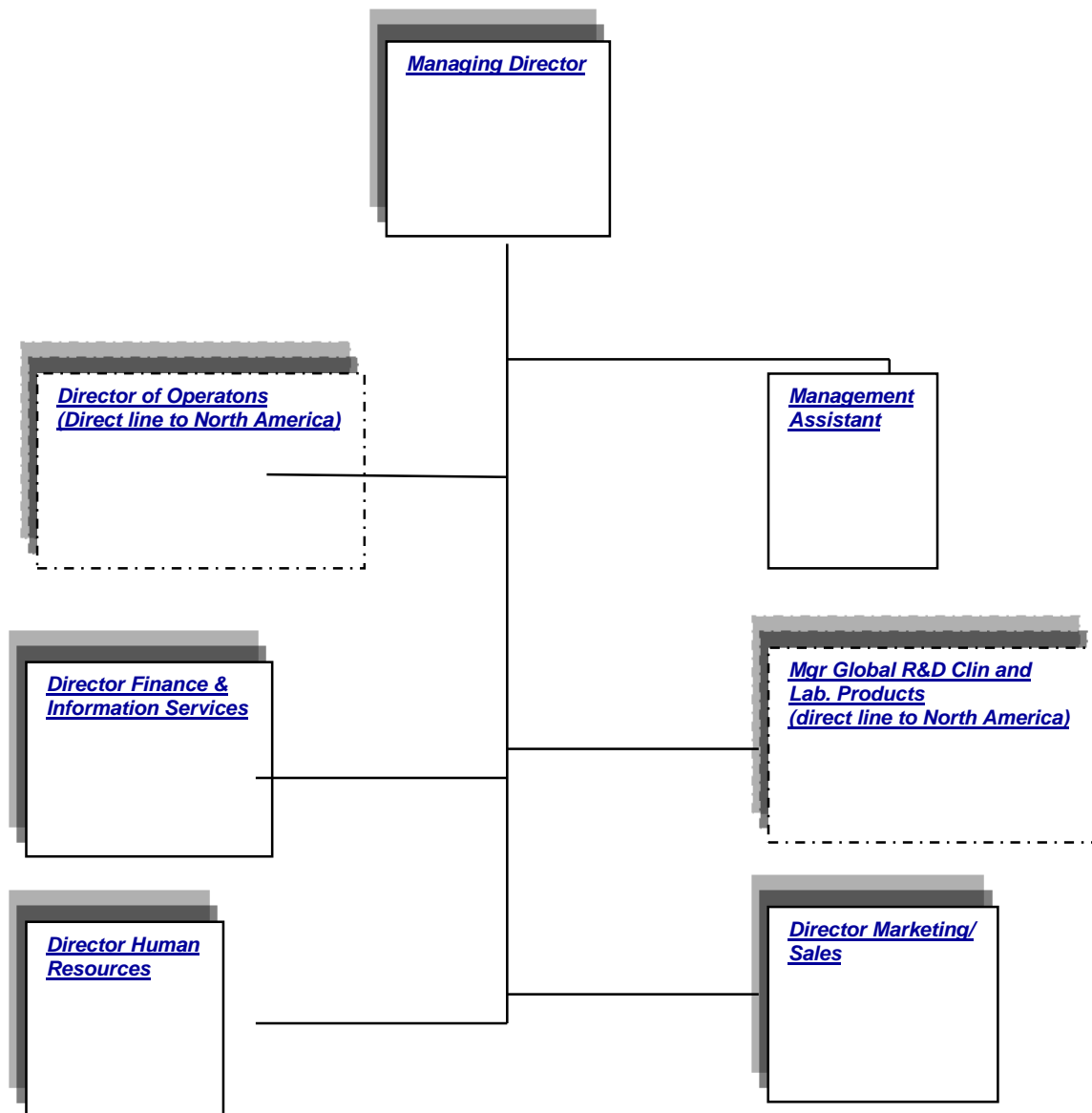
The focus of this research is on the EMEA Region of Maple Beech, located in The Netherlands. For more than 40 years, Maple Beech has been active in The Netherlands, producing and selling products for the European market. Prior to the merger of Maple and Beech in the mid-1990s, the location was a part of the Beech Company, only producing and selling products for the Beech brand. It was only after the merger that Maple products were introduced to the location. The regional headquarters shares its physical location with a manufacturing plant; which primarily produces products for the Beech product portfolio and approximately 75% of products for one division of the Maple products. Products sold in the region which are not produced on site are sourced from other company production sites, located in North America and Asia. The majority of Maple brand products is produced in North America and either directly shipped to the customer or delivered to the European plant for further sale.

Following the sequential evolution of my tenure in the company I first describe my role as Demand Manager before proceeding to describe my role as Pricing Manager and the eventual Project Manager of the IT project.

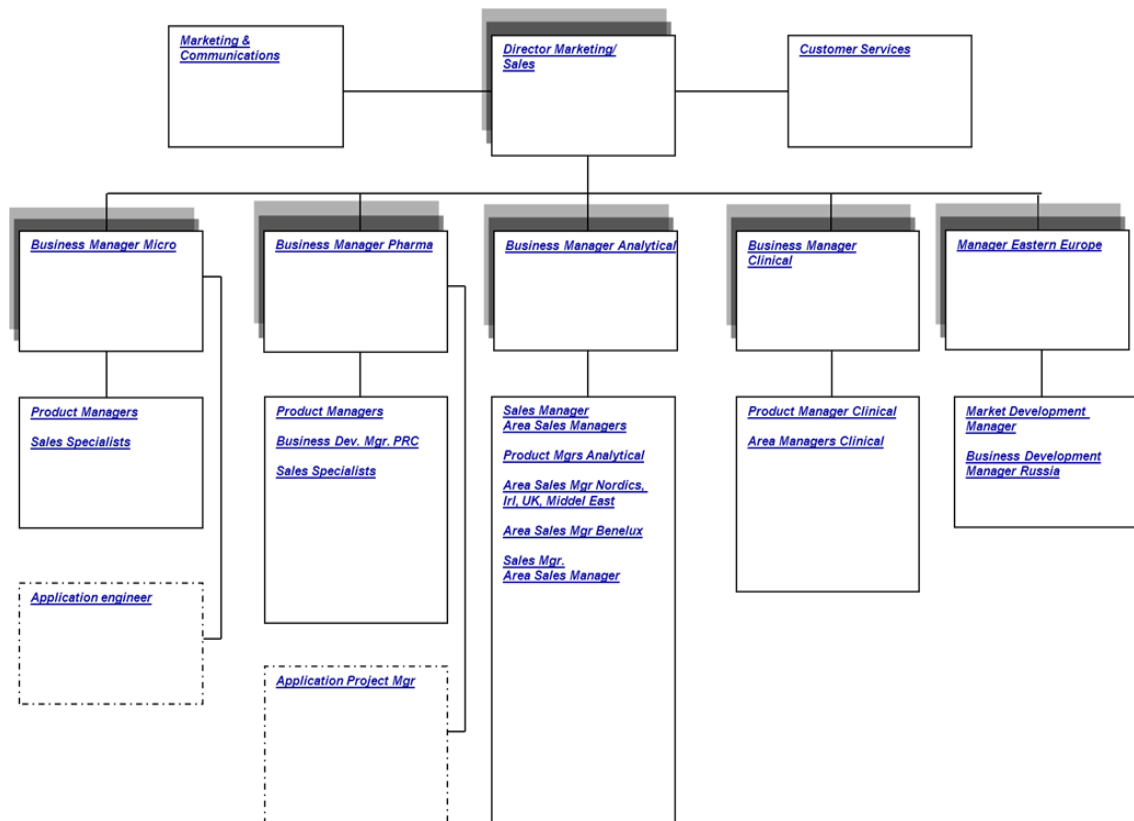
### **Introduction of the Actors and My Roles**

In this account, the various actors who are followed are: Director of Finance (1), Product Managers (8), Myself (1), IT Manager (2), Sales Representatives (15) Customer Service Representatives (8), Market Development Manager (1) Business Unit Managers (4), General Manager (1), Vice President of Sales (1), Director of Product Management (1), The IT System, My Office, The Forecast and The Pricing Policy.

Figure 2- Maple Beech B.V. Organization Chart (Osentoski, 2010)



**Figure 3 - Maple Beech Marketing & Sales Organization Structure (Osentoski, 2010)**



My time at the company began on 2 November, 2009. I was hired to fill the position of Demand and Pricing Manager, as was stated in the introduction chapter. The position was a newly developed one, combining the existing function of Demand Manager with the new function of Pricing Manager. Between the months of November 2009-February 2010 I focused my energy and efforts into wrapping my arms around the existing forecasting process. I needed to learn the systems, processes, terminology, products, customers and my EMEA team members.

Though I reported to the Director of Finance, I was a member of the Commercial arm of the company and had an office on the 2<sup>nd</sup> floor with the rest of the commercial team. At the start I shared this office with the interim-manager but upon her re-assignment to another project, I took over the office as my own. While I did not give it much thought at the time, I was the only mid-



level manager with my own office. My peers at the same job level shared with 2-4 people offices which were either the same size as mine or slightly larger<sup>9</sup>. It had been implied that I would eventually have to share my office; however this never came to fruition. The result, I had the luxury of my own office where I could hold meetings, make conference calls using speakerphone and close the door when I did not want to be disturbed. This perk did not go unnoticed. While I did not experience malicious commentary about my position, passing comments were made about how nice it must be to have so much space, quiet, etc. This detail, which was out of my direct control, later did have implications on my relationship with the commercial team.

***Actualization of my Identity & the Black Box*** (Brown & Middelton, 2005)

*How did having my own office space and reporting to the financial director create or actualize my identity within the commercial team? - Though I was physically on the same floor as the commercial team, in reporting to the financial director I was separated from the commercial network.*

*Furthermore, by having my own office wherein I could close myself off and “black box” my actions as the demand/pricing manager, I was further separated from the existing network. Hence, from the beginning of my employment at the company, I was not a fully participating actor in the commercial team network. I was identified through my reporting relationship and physical workspace as an outsider. The door to my office was a tool by which I could close off or conceal my activities from other actors, thus making that space, the activities I performed within it and myself a black box within the network.*

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<sup>9</sup>My office was per square meter larger than that of my direct supervisor.

Upon entering the door to my office directly to the right hand side was a small desk with a computer, used as a flexible workspace. Members of the sales team or visiting peers from other offices could use this workspace. This met the requirement for me to share my workspace. To the left, behind the door, was a wall mounted coat rack with two hangars. My desk was situated at the far end of the office, an L shaped contraption with the long end placed against the wall and the short end facing the door. Behind me was a set of two windows, looking out onto the front of the building. Both were equipped with sunshades and would open for ventilation. My computer was located in the bend of the L, allowing me to have a 180 degree view of my office. To my right was my telephone and to the left sat a digital picture frame, showing photos of my family and friends. To the far left corner of my desk, next to the window, was a large flower vase<sup>10</sup> which I filled each week with fresh flowers until a colleague gave me a plant to fill the space. On the left wall above my desk was a small white board upon which hung the yearly forecast calendar and written upon the board was my motto, Forecasting is Fun! I sat in the corner of the L on a rolling, adjustable office chair with arms. Opposite of the short L of my desk two chairs were located. These were the type of chairs found in the waiting room of a doctor's office; padded, rigid and mildly uncomfortable, chairs for visitors. This same type of chair took pride of place at the flexible workstation.

*On the wall opposite of my desk was a large white board upon which all of my activities were displayed. Employing visual management techniques<sup>11</sup>, this board was updated regularly with forecast accuracy results, project activities and future planning. Being a subscriber to the clean desk concept, I also had two cabinets filled with binders advertising my various tasks. These cabinets were organized by shelf, each one belonging to a different activity or project. <sup>12</sup>*

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<sup>10</sup>The turquoise tea mug, porcelain bowl, vase and digital picture frame were my personal property.

<sup>11</sup>Visual Management is a part of the Lean Manufacturing philosophy.

<sup>12</sup>I subscribe to the 5S principles of workspace management.

Each evening my daily work was filed away into these binders, folders and shelves and the doors were closed. One small one, with two shelves sat underneath the visual management board. Upon this cabinet sat a ceramic bowl which I filled each week with apples.<sup>13</sup> My turquoise tea mug also took pride of place there along with the coffee cup with orange cats on it. My polka dotted lunch bag resided there as well, concealing my Dora the Explorer drink cup and the selection of leftovers comprising my lunch. Often there was also a plastic box of any shape or size containing homemade baked goods to share with my floor mates. The second, larger cabinet filled the empty wall space between my desk and the flexible workspace. This storage device was 6 feet tall and contained 6 shelves. While unobtrusive, the cabinet created a clear delineation between my workspace and that of the flexi-space.

*When someone wished to enter my domain they were required to cross the wide open expanse of space between me and the door. While said individual was making this journey, I would sit in comfortable chair and wait for them to arrive at my desk. Upon reaching my desk, this person would be invited to sit down on the uncomfortable visitor chairs, these chairs themselves implying that the visitor's presence was not welcome for an extended period of time. Quite often I would also politely ask persons entering my realm "What can I do for you today?", so that I could prepare myself to meet their needs.*

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<sup>13</sup>Visitors to my office were offered to help themselves to a healthy snack.

**Actualization of my Identity & the Black Box** (Brown & Middelton, 2005)

*In filling my space with personal objects, I marked out the space as mine and not ours to others within the company. The office was no longer a shared space, it was Nicole's space and one needed permission to enter into Nicole's space. Following the definition of my office as a black box in which activities took place that were shut off from the rest of the network, the procedure other actors followed to enter into that space identifies it as an obligatory passage point. Before crossing the threshold of the doorway the actor wishing to gain entry needed to state his or her intent, which I then judged as being valid or invalid and would deny or grant access. This identified me as the gatekeeper of the passage point, and had defined the requirements for entry into that space. I determined what was considered a relevant request or not and in doing so, I was using my office as a tool to stabilize my own role within the network and was controlling the flow in and out of it.*

*Through the use of my objects, I was surrounding myself with intermediaries that were further actualizing my identity within the company. These objects in combination with the motto "Forecasting is fun!" were tools used to create my identity and activities as the demand manager as fun and informal. These objects and motto however, also further differentiated and distanced me from the other actors (Callon, 1991; Callon & Latour, 1981; Latour, 1986). Lunch boxes in The Netherlands do not look like soft, polka dot handbags and none of my colleagues carried a drink cup with a cartoon character on it. In seeking to create my fun identity, I had further identified myself as an outsider. This was further supported and crystallized by the reporting relationship, the activities I performed behind closed doors in my black box. From the start of my employment, the role that I had been hired to perform, the formal reporting relationship attached to that role, the space in which it was performed and the objects I used to occupy the space and perform my role set me apart. I was not, a member of the existing commercial team network. In reality, I belonged to another, competing network that identified me as a threat. This leads me to question; if I did not belong to the commercial team network, than to which network did I belong?*

It was in this office that I performed my job tasks for the duration of my employment at the company. With the exception of my first two months in the firm and the 6 months that I employed an intern, I never had an officemate. My name was the only name ever placed on the door. Even months after my departure from the firm <sup>14</sup>, my office stood empty, with my name plaque still on the door, the motto Forecasting is Fun still on the board, project timelines on the walls.

***Actualization of my Identity & the Black Box*** (Brown & Middleton, 2005)

*It was odd and eerie to see my old office standing vacant, with my own handwriting still on the walls. Though there may have been other practical reasons why the space was not being used; leaving my name on the door, the motto Forecasting is Fun and my project timelines on the walls gave the room a haunted feel. It was as though the specter of the roles I had performed and identity(ies) which I had created while in the firm still roamed the halls and continued to exert agency. It was not until my return that I realized how strong that/those identity(ies) was/were and how effective the use of the office space had been in creating, actualizing and crystallizing them (Akrich & Latour, 1992). I didn't even use the office space myself when I returned in the role of an external researcher. I didn't want to be in the room with those ghosts, I was frightened by them and the agency they could exert.*

The creation of the Pricing Manager activities was in response to a consultant report described in the next section, identifying that someone needed to be responsible for the pricing processes. This was further corroborated in interviews with various organizational members during my first weeks at the company. However, as is indicated in the New Pricing Policy project charter, the role itself was created a year in advance of my joining the firm. One of the unique characteristics of the role was that it was defined as being a part of the

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<sup>14</sup>When I returned to the company in October 2011 and February 2012 to conduct interviews, my office had not changed.

Sales organization, but I reported to the Director of Finance. The reasons for this were linked to issues experienced by the previous Demand Manager. The role of Demand Manager was created in 2007 by and initially filled by the same interim manager from whom I took over in 2009. The position was filled by a full time employee in 2008 who after less than a year was fired for failure to perform. At that time, the position reported directly to the company General Manager. However, when the new position was devised, it was determined that while it would remain under the sales umbrella, the individual would report to the Director of Finance. The reasons for this decision were not documented, though the unofficial story was that the GM was not a people manager and there was concern that the next person who would fill the role of Demand Manager would suffer the same fate as the first.

My first encounter with the interim manager I would replace, Mary, and the General Manager, Perry, was when I was interviewing for the position of Demand/Pricing Manager. Unbeknownst to me, at the time when I was interviewing at the firm the person who would be my direct supervisor, Harry, the Director of Finance, was out on medical leave. I would not have the opportunity to meet him until January 2010, when I had already been working in the company for two months. Thus, the selection of me as the person to fill the role and report to him was left to the HR department, the interim manager Mary, Paul a Business Unit Manager and Perry the General Manager. Once I started at the company it was the task of Mary to induct me into the firm and train me in my job tasks. I found this to be unusual considering that she was not an employee of the firm, rather an external consultant who was temporarily filling the role. Mary was also openly critical of the firm and various company members. One quote which stuck in my mind was when she said, *forecasting here sucks*. Though I appreciated the candid information, it left me feeling unsettled considering that was the task I had been hired to do. I ended my first week wondering what it was I had gotten myself into.

*My first two months in the firm I shared what would become my office with Mary as I learned the tasks required for me to fulfill the role of Demand Manager. During that time she occupied the large desk I describe in the introduction and I a flexible work station located by the door. My workplace was a long, rectangular table positioned to the left side of the office door, facing the opposite wall, the doorway in between to my left and the interim manager at her workplace to the right. A desktop computer took pride of place on the table along with a telephone and a standard desk chair was situated behind it. There was no filing cabinet to accompany the workstation and no drawers to speak of as well. The telephone number was even listed as a flexible work station number while the interim manager had her own telephone and number. The design of the telephones was also different; mine being very basic and the one of the interim manager having various functions. I found it to be odd and even irritating that I, as the company employee sitting in what was intended to be my office, was relegated to such a work space while the external consultant enjoyed a more luxurious space. While I did not recognize it at the time, this was a clear sign of my junior position in the hierarchy until she moved on to another project. It also signified the level of influence she possessed within the firm, most specifically with several members of the Management Team. What I would later learn is that one of the comments about the General Manager was that it was his trademark to hire external consultants to fix company issues rather than deal with them internally. One of the results of her long tenure in the company was that Mary had actually become a powerful member of the organization.*

**Actualization of my Identity & the Black Box**

*By assigning me to a temporary workstation, there was a clear signal sent to both me and the organization. Until January when the interim manager moved on to another assignment, I was the junior or trainee demand manager. I was deemed neither knowledgeable nor trustworthy enough to fully assume the demand manager role and the desk associated with it. I was in fact, an outsider.*

### **My First Role- The Demand Manager**

My activities as Demand Manager were focused upon the gathering and transformation of the monthly sales forecast into a demand plan. I would then transform that forecast into a file which could be uploaded into the company ERP system. The establishment of monthly forecasting conversations and information sharing procedures had been done by Mary before my arrival. Therefore it was not my task to set up a new process, rather to maintain and improve upon what was in place. However, not all members of the organization were following the procedures or participating in the process. Based upon my experience in a similar role at another firm I deduced that in order to facilitate the process I would need to develop relationships with the company sales force and the Product Managers.

*In order to develop the necessary relationships with the internal organization I implemented a forecasting improvement program, focused on establishing communication procedures executed on a monthly schedule. The official intent of the program was to increase the amount of information shared by sales with me using a process as structure. The actual intent was to increase the amount of trust the sales force had in me in my role as the Demand Manager. My thought process was, 'if they trust me they will share more information. If they don't trust me, they won't share'. In order to build up this trust I proposed that I would engage in the following activities to meet the external sales force and build relationships: conference calls, customer visits, participation in trade shows and attendance at team events. The sales team members were located across Europe, working out of home offices close to their customer base so with the exception of those located in The Netherlands, they were not often in the office.*



## **Actualization of my Role as the Demand Manager- Translation One**

**Move one – Capturing other's interests** (Latour, 1983); **or**  
**Problemitization & Interressement** (Callon, 1986); **or Localizing the global** (Latour, 2005a)

*When I assumed responsibility for managing the demand forecast, I actualized my role as the Demand Manager. This role was responsible for the translation of the forecast from something which was global - sales occurring out in the macro commercial environment - into something local (Latour, 2005a); a file of numbers which was able to be viewed, analyzed and discussed was the first step in the actualization of my multiple identities within the firm. As the demand manager I was the master of a technique which linked the macro and the micro together (Latour, 1983), which in turn linked the external sales force with the internal office staff.*

*To construct the forecast and achieve my own goal of improving the accuracy of the forecast I was dependent on receiving information from both groups; the external sales force and internal office staff. To succeed as the Demand Manager I needed to devise a method which would stimulate them to participate in the translation process with me. I needed to identify a problem which was relevant to all groups, convince those groups that it was a problem and provide a solution; what Callon (1986) defines as the problemitization phase. The problem identified was a 2 step sequential series; firstly the requirement to have a forecast to translate the macro into the micro; the needs of the external marketplace into a file that was specific to the company to be used to plan production, and secondly, to improve the accuracy of this file so that the needs of the macro could be adequately met by the micro.*

*My predecessor and the senior management of the company had addressed the first stage of the problem through the establishment of the forecasting process that I took over by establishing the forecast as the obligatory passage point; the mechanism by which the demands of the external market [the macro] is translated into a production schedule [the mico] thus solving the problem of making it possible for the micro to meet the demands of the macro.*

*The second phase of the problem, improving the translation process which would improve the accuracy of the forecast was my task. I sold a monthly communication with The Demand Manager (me) as the method by which our issue of improving forecast accuracy could be resolved. I made myself the obligatory passage point for improving forecast accuracy; 'if you wish to solve your problem of needing to improve forecast accuracy, you need to talk to me' (Latour, 1983).*

***Move two – Moving the leverage point from a weak to a strong position*** (Latour, 1983); ***or Enrollment*** (Callon, 1986); ***or Redistributing the local*** (Latour, 2005a)

*Also occurring through this process was the further construction of my identity as the Demand Manager. In seeking to build alliances between the forecast, myself and the sales teams, I was attempting to construct an identity which was of a collaborative nature where all members engaged in the process were co-creators of the forecast in place of me being the owner and creator of the forecast. Though I was seeking to create a collaborative process, I was the only company member who had access to the IT systems to create and transfer the forecast into the ERP system.*

*Through the changing of the scale of translating the macro into the micro, I had reversed the power dynamic between the other actors and myself. As the manager of the translation (macro sales environment into a micro internal forecast) I was stronger than those who were outside; the sales force and internal company members. The translation is more credible and becomes, 'if you want to solve your forecast accuracy problem, come to me in my office because that is where the forces are reversed' (Latour, 1983; Callon & Latour, 1981).*

*Furthermore, I was also, with the exception of my predecessor, the only person who knew how the forecast was built and where it resided in the company files. It was in fact, my creation. In other words, I was the gatekeeper of the ERP interface; being the only person with the authority to upload the forecast into the system or to change the forecast once it had been transferred to the ERP system. So, though I was attempting to create alliances on the one end of the process, at the final stage of the process, when the forecast was transferred, the only alliance that existed was between me, the forecast and the ERP system.*

*The translation of the forecast from a series of numbers in a spreadsheet into the production process was also assigned to the Demand Manager role, further strengthening the agency of the role and its ability to establish and maintain the obligatory passage point. It is through the forecast creation practices that the complex relations between the customers, competitors, external sales force, internal staff and ERP system are transformed (Latour, 1983; Callon, 1991).*

## **The Product Managers**

The other half of the commercial organization with which I needed to develop relationships was the Product Management team. The Product Managers were also located in the EMEA offices, on the same floor as I, which made interpersonal contact possible. The initial group in place at the start of my tenure was comprised of a group of 6 persons, split across the 4 different business units. During the course of my tenure at the company this would grow to a total of 8, shrink back to 7 and eventually result in a group of 4. When I started at the company there were two Product Managers for the Papa business, 2 for Alpha, 1 for Charlie and 1 for Mike. Though the Product Managers reported to the respective Business Unit Manager for their business unit, they performed similar tasks and behaved as a cohesive unit.

*a company where people do not anticipate the risks.”(Product Manager 4- Ingrid)*

Within the original group of 6 members, there was a core group of 3 members who had been at the company for the longest period of time and were viewed as the experts of the group; Helen, Henrietta and Ingrid.

Helen and Henrietta had been at the company for approximately 25 years and had grown up through the organization. Both had started in the Customer Services department and worked their way through various functions into the roles of Product Manager. They were middle aged women, both approximately 40-50 years of age and lived in the same city as the company. They bicycled to work together each morning and home most evenings as well. During the lunch ritual they would sit together and share a large container of milk with each other, switching who would buy it from the canteen each day. They had begun their careers at the firm and it appeared that they would finish their careers there as well. These two were the veterans. The third member of the group was a newer, younger addition. Ingrid had been working at the company for about 5 years when I joined and was only 1 year older than myself. She was a chemist by education, previously working at a university in her home country before taking on the Product Manager role in the company. This individual was outspoken and dedicated to her activities. She didn't mince words, using a colorful vocabulary to express her thoughts and opinions about various aspects of the firm. I found her to be terrifying and wanted to gain her approval and acceptance. Looking back, I realize that her approval of my processes was the one I valued the most. Her social ties with the other Product Managers stemmed back to her partner, another member of the organization who had also spent many years in the firm. The impression I had was that upon her arrival in The Netherlands and the company, she was "adopted" by the other two and they had developed a close bond. Being an immigrant myself I can understand these ties and their development. It was obvious that their friendship extended farther and deeper beyond the four walls of the company. It was this group of three whom Mary had warned me about, stating that it was their trust and support I would need to gain in order to implement changes.

### ***Actualization of my Role as the Demand Manager- Translation One***

***Move three- Moving the world with the lever*** (Latour, 1983); ***or Mobilization*** (Callon, 1986); ***or Connecting the sites*** (Latour, 2005a)

*The depth of the relationship between these 3 Product Managers is elucidated in language they used to describe their working relationship and the activities they performed together or for each other; ‘we can anticipate when others here cannot’. In stating that they are the only 3 who can anticipate in the company, Ingrid separates them from the other Product Managers and from the rest of the company by identifying them as the only actors who can localize the global by translating uncertainty into certainty (Latour, 1983; 2005a). In her definition they are the experts, the only ones who know, the ones who are really in charge (Callon, 1986) and can exert agency within the network (Law, 1986).*

*I had to convince this group of actors that their interests were connected with my own to complete the forecast translation process (Latour, 1983; 2005a; Callon, 1986; Callon & Latour, 1981; Latour, 1986). Their mobilization would further give credibility to the process and to my role within the process. I achieved this by involving them in the monthly communication process in the role of validators of the data provided by the external sales teams. They were able to view the forecast data received by the sales teams and make further adjustments to it based on their overview of the total Business Unit. This ‘joint’ review of the process made it possible for the translation to be understood as a contract between them and me; if they participated in my process, my process would help them to achieve better product level forecast accuracy results and allow them to exert agency over the external sales force (Latour, 1983; 2005a; Callon, 1986; Law, 1986).*

### **The Business Unit Managers**

The next group of organizational members with whom I needed to build relationships was the Business Unit Managers. These individuals were the highest level of management in the commercial organization, reporting directly to the General Manager. In the organization chart there was a position for a

Commercial Director, however the individual who had been performing this role was fired prior to my involvement and was not replaced. Rather, the GM performed a dual role, that of Commercial Director and General Manager. The Business Unit Managers were responsible for all commercial activities performed within their business unit. This resulted in them having both the sales force and 1-2 Product Managers reporting to them. Whilst these individuals had physical offices in the EMEA HQ, on the same floor as the Product Managers and myself, they were not on site every day. Two of them, Business Unit Manager Mike and Business Unit Manager Charlie lived several hours away from the offices and worked from home most days, coming to the office a maximum of 1-2 days per week.

Business Unit Manager Charlie was responsible for a sales team of 2 persons and 1 Product Manager (Henrietta) when I joined the firm. A second Product Manager (Tim) would be added during my tenure bringing the department total up to 4. Hank was in his early 50s, married with 2 children, living in what is known as the bible belt of the Netherlands. Though his previous work experience was with a prestigious company in the clinical chemicals industry, he was considered to be incompetent by his direct reports. This was only discussed behind closed doors when Hank was not on site. After having several forecasting and financial performance conversations with Hank, it became apparent to me that the level of business acumen was low relative to the position and I shared the sentiment of my colleagues.

Business Unit Manager Alpha was relatively new and was in the office every day that he was not traveling. Paul had been a part of the company for about 8 months before I arrived and was struggling to wrap his arms around an unruly business. He had been given the task of turning around a Business Unit which was showing negative profitability year over year. He was responsible for a team of 2 Product Managers (Ingrid and Raoul) and 8 Sales People. Most of his sales team had been with the company for years and were known to be

entrenched in their ways. It was viewed as the most challenging Business Unit to manage by my colleagues.

Clark had been working at the company for 8 years and was confident in his position. His Business Unit Papa was the most profitable of the 4 BUs and was full of ideas of how the others could improve. He was responsible for 2 Product Managers (Helen and Cindy) and 6 sales persons located throughout Europe. Clark was approximately mid 40s, married with no children and lived in a luxurious neighborhood 15 minutes away from the office, but chose to work from home whenever possible. The result was that it was often the case that the Business Unit Manager offices would be empty. This did not go unnoticed by their direct reports, namely the Product Managers, who would remark about the empty offices.

***Actualization of my Role as the Demand Manager- Translation One***

***Move three- Moving the world with the lever*** (Latour, 1983); ***or Mobilization*** (Callon, 1986); ***or Connecting the sites*** (Latour, 2005a)

*Though hierarchically the Business Unit Managers were those members who had been assigned authority within the firm, their lack of active engagement in the day-to-day activities or relative newness to the company weakened their position within the network (Law, 1986). This was due to their inconsistent presence in the office, resulting in a lower level of interaction of the Business Unit Managers with the other actors within network, thus reducing their influence on the network to one that was hierarchically performed, but not actively reinforced through actions (Latour, 2005a). They were sometimes actors who made decisions, but did not transform those decisions into actions (Latour, 2005a).*

*The Product Managers were consistent actors and engaged in routines and rituals that further reinforced their relationship with each other and their ability to exert agency on others in the firm through the act of transforming the decisions made by their superiors into action. Looking back to the comment from Product Manager Ingrid about how she, Henrietta and Helen were the only ones who could anticipate in the company also illustrates the perception/reality of the actual power and knowledge of the Business Unit Managers in relation to them. They, the Product Managers, viewed themselves as being more knowledgeable, capable and in fact, powerful than their direct superiors.*

*That being said, it was necessary to mobilize this set of actors in the forecast translation. Though their relative power position was weaker internally, they were the direct supervisors for both the external sales force and the product managers and I needed their support to make the forecasting process a success. This was achieved through the inclusion of forecast accuracy metrics into their business level targets, which were used to determine their annual bonuses. In connecting the forecast success to their financial bonus system, it made it possible for me to sell them on the idea that working with me would benefit them (Latour, 1983; 2005a). While the Business Unit Managers were not actively involved in the monthly forecasting processes, their support was necessary to reinforce the involvement of their teams. Thus, by mobilizing them, I was able to use their hierarchical authority to mobilize others (Law, 1986).*

### **The General Manager**

The final organization member whose support was critical for my role was the General Manager, Perry. I considered him to be the most powerful person in the BV, reporting directly to the company president. As previously mentioned, he was also the acting Commercial Director, thus making his support of my activities even more critical. Perry was a gentleman in his early 60s, nearing the age of retirement at 65. He had spent a majority of his career at a large pharmaceutical company, starting up offices in new locations around the world.



After many years living abroad he and his wife decided to return to the Netherlands to be close to their children and grandchildren. When I joined the company he had been operating in the role of GM for 6 years and was heading up a profitable division of the company. The Papa and Mike businesses were performing well, covering the losses incurred by the Alpha and Charlie groups. Business was stable and though there were organizational issues in the company, there appeared to be no major problems to speak of. My impression of the first few months in the company was that life was easy at the top. What I quickly noticed about Perry was that he never made decisions. When we would attend meetings or issues would be escalated, he would re-assign the task of fixing the problem to someone else. He used meditative agency in place of translation agency. It became apparent that this was his management style. Thus, problems or issues were not resolved, rather they would be shuffled around and discussed until they either went away on their own or were able to be hidden once more.

Another one of Perry's characteristics was his office checking walk. His office was at the opposite end of the hallway from mine and he would periodically walk up and down the hallway, sticking his head into people's office to check on what they were doing. These were not friendly checks to see how you were doing, these were checks to make sure that we were all working. This would become particularly evident if you had your office door closed and were conversing with another colleague. Without knocking he would burst into your office and ask, 'what's going on here?' Or, if he wanted to ask you something, the same bursting in scenario would occur and he would interrupt your meeting.

### ***Actualization of my Role as the Demand Manager- Translation One***

***Move three- Moving the world with the lever*** (Latour, 1983); ***or Mobilization*** (Callon, 1986); ***or Connecting the sites*** (Latour, 2005a)

*Similar to the Business Unit Manager, Perry was an actor who had authority through the organizational hierarchy but did not actively perform in the network to translate this authority into performative agency (Callon, 1986; Latour, 2005a; Law, 1986). Through his use of external consultants to resolve internal issues he reduced his influence within the network by assigning agency to others. Those consultants, as was the case with my predecessor Mary, were the actors who performed and through their performances exerted agency. Perry was nothing more than a figurehead or mediator (Callon, 1986) while others performed the roles that influenced the network. However, similar to the role of the Business Unit Managers, his support of the forecasting process was necessary for my success as the Demand Manager.*

*Perry was under pressure from the head offices in the US (Law, 1986) to improve the forecast accuracy in Europe, which had been one of the drivers for hiring me to perform the Demand Manager role. Thus, support of my communication processes aimed at improving forecast accuracy were of direct benefit to him. It was he who implemented the forecast accuracy targets into the Business Unit Managers annual bonus structure, which enabled me to mobilize them into the process. In this instance, he did translate a decision into action and in doing so, exerted agency which directly benefited my forecast translation process.*

### **Company Routines and Rituals**

*Life at the company was punctuated by a regular schedule of meetings, which gave structure to the weeks and months. There were weekly meetings, bi-weekly meetings and monthly meetings. The length, duration, frequency and attendees for each meeting were linked to the*

*purpose of the meeting itself. While I was expected to run meetings related to Demand Management, I was often invited to present or discuss related activities in the Marketing & Sales Meeting and the Leadership Team Meeting. (Reflective Journal)*

The Marketing & Sales Meeting was a bi-weekly meeting, held each Monday from 9 am – 12 noon. This was the platform where all commercial activities occurring in the company were presented, discussed and agreed upon. The decisions made in this meeting would result in projects or changes to policy and process. The GM Perry chaired the meeting, with all 4 Business Unit Managers participating along with the Business Development Manager (Mark), Customer Services Manager (Larry), Marketing and Communications Manager (Nina), Director of Finance (Harry) and Perry's assistant Annie taking notes. It is important to note that participation in this meeting by any other organizational members not included in the direct reports of the GM was by invitation only. As an invited guest you would be requested to join the meeting at a particular time in the agenda and present or participate for that agenda point for a predetermined period of time. Once that agenda point was closed, you were asked to leave the room again. Though I was invited to participate in the meeting, I was not a regularly participating member of the M&S meetings.

It was however, not uncommon for my boss Harry to approach me after the meetings with a task or activity which I had been assigned during the meeting. This would also happen between the Business Unit Managers and their direct reports, the Product Managers. The sentiment expressed by the Product Managers about this and their Business Unit Managers was that they (the Business Unit Managers) found it easy to decide upon policies and procedures because they didn't have to put the work in to execute them. In their (the Product Managers) perception, there was a lack of understanding of what was required to make policies, projects and procedures actionable.

My proposal to increase the amount of communication between the commercial organization and myself was approved and supported by the GM, Perry. These activities were supported by the company management and were facilitated by the Business Unit Managers, to whom the sales force reported. Over the course of the first 4-5 months of my tenure in the company I focused my energy on meeting the external sales force and Product Managers. These activities were supported by the company management and were facilitated by the Business Unit Managers, to whom the sales force and Product Managers reported.

***Actualization of my Role as the Demand Manager- Translation One***

***Move three- Moving the world with the lever (Latour, 1983); or Mobilization (Callon, 1986); or Connecting the sites (Latour, 2005a)***

*In gaining the support of the General Manager and the Business Unit Managers I had entered myself into an alliance with the members of the organization who were deemed to be ineffective by the other actors in the network. Because these members did not consistently act, they were only able to exert authority through hierarchy, but not actually exert agency over the network through action (Callon, 1986; Latour, 2005a; Law, 1986).*

**Company Relationships**

The relationship between the Business Unit Managers and the Product Managers was a complex

one from outside

observation. While there were direct reporting lines between the two, Product Managers reporting to the Business Unit Managers, splitting the Product Managers into separate business units, in reality they

*"Because we always say that we are all responsible and that means that nobody is responsible. So the decisions were made on the higher level, on the sales and marketing level, and were never translated into actions...Last year we were sitting for 3 weeks between the marketing and sales meeting and nobody did anything because there was no marketing and sales meeting. I even have the mails last year. They had a task at the M&S meeting, it was not done, the next one was cancelled and then two week after they had the new one at which they concluded that nothing was done of the tasks."*  
(Product Manager 4- Ingrid)

functioned as a cohesive unit. Each Business Unit Manager was responsible for a product category or group, and while some of the business practices they used to execute their tasks were unique to the products and go-to market strategy of the business unit, many of the tasks remained the same. What I learned about this phenomenon was that before my arrival the Product Managers were actually one team and it was only 1-2 years before my arrival that the Business Unit structure had been put into place. Thus, while the official reporting lines for the Product Managers had changed, they continued to function with the same group mentality as before. There was an underlying tension between the Product Managers and Business Unit Managers. It was the opinion of the Product Managers that the Business Unit Managers had no idea what they actually did and were not aware of the amount of work required to execute the decisions made during the M&S meetings.

While the Business Unit Managers were the 'leaders' of the business units, in reality, it was the Product Managers who kept the businesses running. There were several reasons for this. Firstly, there were several members of the group, Helen and Henrietta, who had been at the company for 20+ years, and had built up many of the practices which were in place and had been in the organization for, in most cases, a significantly longer period of time than their supervisors. This also meant that their internal networks and relationships with customers were more established than those of their management. Secondly, the power of numbers was another contributing factor to the role of the Product Managers. They had intimate knowledge of business processes and as a team, they outnumbered their management. There were anywhere between 6-8 Product Managers at one time in comparison to 4 Business Unit Managers. The Product Managers worked closely together, many of them sharing offices, and would collaborate across business lines. At the Business Unit Manager level, this type of collaborative activity did not occur. The Business Unit Managers were focused on their individual businesses, had their own offices and were often not present in the office. What I observed in the Product Manager, Business Unit Manager relationship was that if the Product Managers decided an activity, process or initiative did not meet their approval, they would mount a

united front against the process and push back against their management, the Business Unit Managers. In the face of resistance, the Business Unit Managers would relent and the Product Managers would get their way.

***Actualization of my Role as the Demand Manager- Translation One***

***Move three- Moving the world with the lever*** (Latour, 1983); ***or Mobilization*** (Callon, 1986); ***or Connecting the sites*** (Latour, 2005a)

*The Product Managers were the actors within the company who performed, or acted to put the decisions made by those actors in higher management into action; in other words, they translated decisions into action (Callon, 1986; Latour, 2005a; Law, 1986). If they, the Product Managers, were not in agreement with a decision, they would not act upon it, thus making the decision a moot point. Therefore, though on paper the General Manager and Business Unit Managers were the company members with authority, it was the Product Managers who were exerting agency through their performance. Their relationship with each other, specifically the core group of 3, was consistently reinforced through their group rituals (Latour, 1986; Callon, 1998), thus strengthening their alliance with each other and asserting their position within the network. By not being capable of translating decisions into action, the General Manager and Business Unit Managers were rendered ineffective by the Product Managers.*

**Full actualization of my Demand Manager Role**

In the months spanning from November 2009- March 2010 I focused purely on performing my role as the Demand Manager. Forecasting at our company was a monthly process, following a 4-5 week schedule. Each week there was some type of forecasting activity that needed to be executed. We worked on a 52 week schedule, with a 4-4-5 week process. Two months of 4 weeks and one month of 5 weeks, to be followed by the same sequence. To structure the forecasting activities there was a weekly schedule that had been made by the interim manager, which I inherited and continued to enhance. Week 1 was the

most intense week for me as the Demand Manager as it was the week where the most activities would occur. At the beginning of the week the results from the previous month would be published in our ERP system and I was able to download the past demand history to calculate the forecast accuracy of the month. I had to run the calculations, load them into the measurement tools we used to track forecast accuracy each month and communicate the results to the business. When I first started, this activity would cost me a full day.

After several months I had become efficient enough to run the process in about half of the time. The next several days in week 1 were dedicated to making final checks and revisions to the forecast that would be uploaded the end of that week. I was responsible for creating together with the commercial organization a 12 month rolling forecast, predicting 1 month in advance of the current month +11 additional months what we thought customers would order. In order to do this, as I had explained in the previous section, I would hold conference calls and have meetings with the field sales force and the Product Managers. The field sales force was responsible for providing customer level forecast information which I would load into the forecast.

The forecast was a giant spreadsheet which I maintained. I was the only person in the company who had access to the file and was able to make changes to it. The forecast file resided outside of our ERP system and was only visible to others if I shared it; while we were having a meeting or after it had been loaded into the ERP system. It was also built at the total product level, i.e., even if I had customer specific forecasts, unless they were the only customer who purchased that particular product, it was almost impossible to add their insights into the tool. However, the generation of the forecast was intended to be a joint process between the sales force, product management, customer service, the business managers and myself.

My role was intended to facilitate the process but in reality I was viewed as the owner of the forecast. It was 'my' forecast and though some individuals did actively participate, the forecast remained under my care. The two main reasons for this were as follows, first, as I had stated before, the forecast was created in a giant spreadsheet outside of the ERP system which only I had access to. This limited the ability of the field sales people and product management to load their own forecast information. It was a completely manual process as well, which made it cumbersome to manage. Secondly, while our General Manager Perry espoused that

forecasting should reside with the commercial teams, there was no pressure upon them to actively do so.

With the exception of the forecast accuracy reporting, it was impossible in

the manual system to track and trace the interface they had with me as the demand manager. I even had Business Unit Managers try to negotiate with me to reduce their forecast accuracy targets because they didn't find it to be of importance. However, as I had stated in the previous section, forecast accuracy did improve and this positive result earned the confidence in the organization. By investing time and energy in getting to know my colleagues and their businesses, while they still didn't necessarily understand their role in the process, they did appear to trust my management of it.

*"If that is what Nicole thinks will happen, then I accept that. She is the forecasting expert and I trust her judgment." (Business Unit Manager Papa - Clark)" ...Henrietta, Helen or me, we can anticipate and we are working in*



### ***Actualization of my Role as the Demand Manager- Translation One***

***Move three- Moving the world with the lever*** (Latour, 1983); ***or Mobilization*** (Callon, 1986); ***or Connecting the sites*** (Latour, 2005a)

*Through the way in which I performed the forecasting activities, I had in fact turned myself, my and the forecast I created within it into both an obligatory passage point and a black box* (Brown & Middleton, 2005; Callon, 1986; Callon & Law, 1988; Latour, 1983; Latour, 1986; Latour, 2005a). *Nobody else in the network knew what it was that I actually did in that office to generate the final forecast, nor how I used the input they had provided. This created a situation where the content created within that black box could not be contested by other actors, as they were unaware of how it came to be. When the actors accepted the black box and its contents, they also accepted the output, thus solidifying its nature and reinforcing its uncontested nature. Furthermore, by subscribing to the communication procedures I had implemented, they accepted my role as the Demand Manager as the obligatory passage point for forecast creation. My process offered the solution to the problem of localizing the global market requirements into data that was usable* (Latour, 1983; 2005a) *and improving forecast accuracy.*

*In allying myself with the forecast, I had in fact assumed the role as the spokesperson* (Callon, 1986; Callon & Latour, 1981; Latour, 1986) *for the forecast. In the eyes of the network, I was the forecast. What I had failed to recognize was that I had allied myself with a process that was viewed to be of little to no value by the commercial team. The forecast was to them a necessary evil; something that had to be done in order for the operations team to produce. In fact, the forecast was a tool that had been created by the operations department and was forced upon the commercial team several years before I joined the firm. Therefore, I was unknowingly allied with a process that had not been asked for, but had rather been imposed upon the commercial team members. The forecast was often blamed as the cause for various issues between the commercial and production sides of the organization.*

*Thus, I had become the spokesperson for an actor who was not highly valued by the other actors in the network. However, due to its ability to exert agency through leading the production planning process, link to performance goals and its use as an input into the financial budgeting process, the forecast was an actor that could exert agency over the network. It was not only an actor but a powerful actor, and through my alliance and spokesperson role, I also became, a powerful actor within the network (Law, 1991; Latour, 1986). In assuming the role of Demand Manager I had also assumed the role of the spokesperson for the forecast, which made it possible for my colleagues to view me in the same way they viewed the forecast. This was the first role in which I actively de-humanized myself through my performative alliance (Law, 1986) with a non-human actor within the network of the Aspen Company (Latour, 1991; Latour, 2005; Law, 1991; Latour, 1983; Strathern, 1996; Akrich & Latour, 1992). However, though I was aware that I was perceived as being “the forecast”, I did not recognize at the time the consequences of my actions. I had in fact, already made it possible for my colleagues to de-humanize me, which would have consequences for me when taking on a new role within the company.*

The forecast accuracy improved from 55 to 60% during the months of January to June 2010, management was pleased with the performance and it appeared that I was being accepted by the organization. I was a participating member of the lunch ritual; I was being invited to business unit team activities and even off site lunches with the Product Managers and Marketing and Communications department. It was in the spring of 2010 that the project around which this study is centered would begin and my interaction with my peers would be altered.

*After several months of travel, phone calls, presentations, customer visits and sales meetings I had been introduced to the team and was beginning to see some results. The forecast accuracy was slowly improving and my colleagues appeared to have faith in my abilities. I was readily invited to participate in commercial activities and I felt more*

*confident in my ability to manage the process. It was during this time period that my supervisor also returned from his sick leave and I had the chance to build a relationship with my director. At this point in time I felt positive about my role and future in the company. (Reflective Journal, 2012)*

## **My Second and Third Roles- The Pricing Manager & IT Project Lead**

### **The Product**

Managers often expressed that they were overworked, had too many responsibilities, there was not enough time and they needed certain tasks to be removed from their workload. An activity targeted for removal was management of the Pricing Processes and the Annual Price Adjustment. These two activities were delegated to my role as the Pricing Manager. I discovered that to the Product

*"What factors (data, process, communication) do you think would make the adjustment this year a success? "(Me)*

*"Yeah, all of the prices of all product should be increased at the same time. We act as a company and not as a business group. There is a coordinator who gets the mandate and the people to do that. She chooses the people. And ehm, yeah. That's, the sales has to follow exactly as it is said. We always had the process, we had the emails, who is doing what and when. But of course you send the file in a format and you get it back in another format. And the sale doesn't, still didn't learn that different customer numbers are connected to the same netto prices cannot have different prices for the same product."(Product Manager 4- Ingrid)*

*"Basically, the project leader, the person with the authority to do so. I think ehm.... Better system, excel is nice but not really robust system, that's better I think.... And also, ehm, a clear authorization of every functionality. We have the in the procedure that the Business Manager is responsible for this part then the Product Manager and the Sales Specialist. But we have that only in the procedure lets say. I think we have to use it also. And have it also in our systems. During the year every sales specialists makes a new net price, we have to add it manually, admin in Customer Service adds it into the system. But before they can add it needs approval. But right now they have a price but do not know what authority needs to do the approval. So they send it to Product Management and we need to do the margin checks to see which functionality needs to approve the price." (Product Manager 1- Helen)*

Managers, this meant that I would perform the activities in the way they wanted it to be done. When conducting preliminary interviews to gain insight into the processes I was taking over, I received suggestions about HOW to execute my tasks to meet the expectations of the Product Managers.

Embedded in the pieces of advice is a message from the Product Managers about how they think I should perform my role as the Pricing Manager. They stated that I should have authority to mandate/own the process and include the people who really know what the pricing process is about, which implies them. There is no mention of using a different type of system [than the one they had developed]; rather minor changes or adjustments to their process are

recommended.  
 Their view of my  
 role as the Pricing  
 Manager was to  
 have authority over  
 the process but not  
 to change the  
 process itself; it  
 wasn't expected  
 that I would  
 introduce a  
 different process or  
 perform differently  
 than they had.

*"What advice would you give to the next person who will coordinate the price adjustment process?" (Me)*

*"Yeah, to ask for a mandate so that nobody can interfere. And to involve the people who know how the system works and how the other people work. And good luck. "(Product Manager 4- Ingrid)*

*"Be sure that you have the authorities, also. And, stick to the rules that you made, stick to the rules, Its, I don't know that it was that I don't have authority or the Product Manager doesn't have authority.. We send the files to our sales group and every sales person sends it back in a different format. Its possible that sales reps make their own process that they think its easier or better. So they want to discuss every year that their process is good or better..So if you have a good process, and you can only improve the next year. I think that you want to have the files returned as you send them. I think you have to be very clear and yeah, I think the best way is to return the files that you receive that are not according to your format." (Product Manager 1- Helen)*

*the procedure lets say. I think we have to use it also. And have it also in our systems. During the year every sales specialists makes a new net price, we have to add it manually, admin in Customer Service adds it into the system. But before they can add it needs approval. But right now they have a price but do not know what authority needs to do the approval. So they send it to Product Management and we need to do the margin checks to see which functionality needs to approve the price." (Product Manager 1- Helen)*

### ***Actualization of my Role as the Pricing Manager- Translation Two***

*When I conducted the interviews with the previous owners of the Annual Price Adjustment I quickly discovered that with the exception of 1 person, two of the of the three people who had run the process before me were from the core group of Product Managers; Helen, Henrietta and Ingrid. Both Helen and Ingrid had run the process in the years preceding my arrival and had been two of the key members involved in establishing the processes and procedures used. During the interviews they go into great depth explaining the process they use and why they think it hasn't been as effective as they wanted. In the view of the product managers, these issues were related to a lack of authority over the process, that others involved were not forced to use the same spreadsheet format, that the sales force doesn't follow procedure, that the Business Unit Managers don't take ownership of the process. What they don't tell me is to develop a new process, search for a better system or change the Pricing Policy.*

*This reveals that in their perception, the process and tools they are using is sufficient and does not need to be changed. Rather, someone else needs to manage the process and enforce the procedures used. Hence, the Product Managers saw my role as the Pricing Manager as one that served them in further achieving their goals rather than an autonomous role. I should accept the processes that they had created, adopt those processes and make sure that I continued to keep them involved in those processes. They viewed my role as one which was inherently allied with theirs, rather than being allied with any other actors in the network. If I allied myself with them in my role as Pricing Manager, I would further strengthen their position within the network in situ through the indirect association they would have with the hierarchical authority that was connected to my role as the Pricing Manager. Because I was new to the company and didn't know the procedures, there was an assumption that I would need them to help me, which in turn would help them.*

As I took on more responsibility for the pricing procedures at the company, I did indeed rely the knowledge of the product managers to gain understanding into how prices were managed. However, rather than re-iterate their processes and procedures, I was instructed [by my boss Harry] to implement a new pricing management tool that would render the processes of the Product Managers redundant. These instructions resulted in my role as the Pricing Manager to become intertwined with the role of the IT Project Lead. Due to the timing of the IT project, I assumed both roles with less than a 2 month gap in between, inherently linking them together in my mind though structurally, the IT Project Lead role was a subset of the Pricing Manager role. To fully actualize my identity as the Pricing Manager, it was necessary to also actualize my identity as the IT Project Lead.

### ***Actualization of my Role as the Pricing Manager & IT Project Lead- Translation Two***

*In rejecting the processes and procedures developed by the Product Managers to manage the Annual Price Adjustment Process, I had rejected them in my role as the Pricing Manager. By following the directive from my boss I had allied myself with a rival of the Product Managers within the construct of pricing management. Thus, I had already identified myself as a competitor to their network in my role as the Pricing Manager (Callon, 1986).*

### **My Third Role- The IT Project Lead**

*In the last week of March 2010 I began to work on the New Pricing Policy Project, or as it was later called the IT implementation. My first knowledge of the existence of the IT project was earlier than my involvement however, Mary had referred to the project several times in passing, indicating that I was to take on a role in the implementation. However, until that first conference call in March, I hadn't thought or given the project much thought at all. (Reflective Journal, 2012)*

My first encounter with the project was a conference call with the IT lead from the USA and two IT staff members from my offices. Though I knew I was to be the business lead on the project, I had limited knowledge of the IT system and the project background. Until that point my experience with the pricing policies and processes had been limited. Furthermore, due to the project resulting from an RFIS (request for information services), the US IT member lead the project setup. Jacob designed the project timeline based on technical requirements and I would lead the business implementation. This resulted in a two-timeline approach, 1 for the technical implementation and 1 for the business implementation; the differences lying in the activities to be performed. My timeline included events such as training, data transfer and functionality testing. The IT services timeline included aspects such as establishing the interface with the ERP system, writing or updating system codes and establishing checks to

validate the data transfer process. Our roles were defined by the tasks we performed and how we interacted with the system itself. I was the project lead/business owner of the IT system acting as the first point of contact for all EMEA office issues related to the IT system for the duration of the project and thereafter.

***Actualization of my Role as the Pricing Manager & IT Project Lead-  
Translation Two***

*Through the definition of my role as the IT project lead and business owner I had been identified or assigned the role of spokesperson for the system (Latour, 2005). By performing the tasks associated with the role; user training, facilitating the data transfer and conducting functionality testing, it was expected that I would actualize that identity and speak on behalf of the system (Latour, 2005a). These were decisions made before I had joined the company, thus, it was a role and identity that was forced upon me when I made the decision to accept a job at the company. However, in accepting the job I also accepted or subjected myself to the role (Clegg, 1989).*

The system would go-live on 1 September 2010, thus determining the timeline of events to follow. Between the months of March and September 2010 I performed my forecasting tasks alongside my new role as the IT project lead. In the project lead role I was responsible for overseeing the data transfer process, testing, training, user manuals, project communication and user support. In the beginning stages of the project re-birth my boss Harry performed the lead role in the project, organizing project team meetings and participating on conference calls. However, as the project progressed and my knowledge increased I took on more responsibility and the project team members identified during the original project initiation phase were re-activated.

One of the first hurdles in the project was revising the existing company pricing policy. The IT system being implemented had been developed in the US offices to support their business processes and in Europe we were following different

processes and the tool was unable to support the existing EMEA pricing rules. I was asked to revise the existing EMEA pricing policy to fit the rules that were defined in the IT system.

***Actualization of my Role as the Pricing Manager & IT Project Lead-  
Translation Two***

*At this stage I had not yet actualized my role as either the Pricing Manager or the IT Project Lead as I had not performed any activities related to the role itself. Though I was involved in preliminary activities related to the project set up, it was not until the project began to move through the states of translation that my roles became fully actualized.*

***A problem is identified***

Problemitization is the stage where one, some or many of the actors involved attempt to make themselves indispensable to the other actors through the definition of a problem and a proposed solution to that problem (Callon, 1986). Latour identifies this stage in actor-network theory as Move one – capturing others' interests (1983) or Localizing the global (Latour, 2005). By defining the problem and the solution, the actor(s) then set about convincing the other actors in the network that this is the one and only solution. The proposed solution to the problem is defined as the 'obligatory passage point', the one gateway through which all actors in the network must pass in order to resolve the problem (Law, 1986; Lee & Brown, 1994; Latour, 1986; Latour, 2005; Latour, 1983).

The existing company pricing policy that I was to revise had been created in response to negative advice given during an external audit conducted in 2006 and again follow-up audit in 2008. To understand the logic behind the policy and how it came to be I conducted historical research into its origins. My boss Harry had been at the company in 2006 and provided me with the Audit Reports



and a subsequent Consultant Report that further outlined why and how the pricing policy had been established. These documents, in combination with interviews with my colleagues, provided insight into why it was deemed necessary to implement the IT system which was in turn forcing changes to the pricing policy.

In the fiscal year 2005-2006 the Aspen Company was audited by an external auditing firm with the purpose validate the transparency and adherence of the company's financial processes. Pricing procedures used at the company were found to be non-compliant resulting in two as described in the Management Letter;

*Furthermore, price agreements are not in all cases properly documented and sometimes are completely deleted.... Also, not all orders are approved in accordance with company policy. Taken into account the liberty of external sales officers to make price agreements there is a risk that goods are sold at incorrect prices. (External Audit 2006)*

In response to the audit 2005-2006, an internal Pricing Policy was implemented in January 2007 specifying discount structures at the product/division level and defined percentage discounts to be offered per job role. This policy outlined the approval requirements for Sales Representatives to follow when offering pricing to a customer outside of the authority granted to them. However, this policy failed to resolve the issues identified in the original audit and when the external auditors returned for a subsequent audit in 2007-2008, the two issues described in the management letter of 2005-2006 remained open.

*Furthermore, price agreements are not in all cases properly documented and sometimes are completely deleted.– This situation still exists....Also, not all orders are approved in accordance with company policy. Taken into account*

*the liberty of external sales officers to make price agreements there is a risk that goods are sold at incorrect prices. – Reference is made to the current year management letter. (External Audit 2008)*

It was at this stage that the Financial Director of Aspen became involved.

*“The pricing was managed by commercial group and they have their way of doing things and there was no big issue until we had auditors coming in. And when the audits came in and did some checks and balances on how we did pricing and found that there were gaps then I was involved, that was about five to six years ago. Also [during] that period we had discussion with the commercial group that things need to be more formalized and authorized and documented and that did not happen. It wasn’t found in our management letter so it is something you don’t want to happen to as a company it is alright to say hey this is [Inaudible] [0:03:21] a letter so this, when my involvement became more and more pre-dominant or dominant, I can say that.” (Financial Director-Harry)*

***Actualization of my Role as the Pricing Manager & IT Project Lead-  
Translation Two***

***Move one – Capturing other’s interests*** (Latour, 1983); ***or Problemization*** (Callon, 1986); ***or Localizing the global*** (Latour, 2005a)

*When the pricing procedures used at the Aspen Company were subjected to external examination, they were deemed not to be compliant with audit requirements. According to the auditors, who were external to the company, the external sales force had too much liberty in making pricing agreements with customers. There was also a lack of documentation of the procedures used, making it impossible to track or trace how pricing agreements were made, if they were correct or if they existed at all.*

*Within the construct of pricing, the external sales force was able to behave in any way they liked and though there were policies in place, there were no mechanisms to enforce adherence to the policy (Law, 1986). At the time of the external audits, the pricing policy was not an actor and did not exert any agency within the networkInvalid source specified.. It was a document but it was not actively used by the actors within the network making it impossible to use as a method of control over other actors (Law, 1986). Because nobody used it, nobody was able to exert agency through it (Clegg, 1989).*

*However, in providing negative advice during the audit, the external auditors exerted agency over the company management, specifically my boss Harry, the Financial Director. In response to the negative audit advice he took action with the objective to solve the issue of non-compliance. Thus, it was not the pricing policy, or actors internal to the company who initiated the process of translation; it was an external auditing body that exerted agency on the company network (Clegg, 1989) which stimulated the process of translation. Once he took on ownership of the issue of non-compliance, Harry accepted the role assigned to him by the auditors, acknowledged that a problem existed and in doing so also identified the problem for company. . This allied him with the external auditors and made him part of a network which was external to the firm (Latour, 2005).*

Company management hired an external consultant in 2008 to investigate and provide recommendations to pricing policy and process.. Two specific areas were examined; Pricing Procedures and Price Increase Procedures. After a 3-6 month investigation (exact dates of the project were not disclosed), an advice report was produced, opening with the following statement:

*“Aside from a few minor details, the Pricing Policy and Pricing Procedures as they have been determined with the company appear to be aligned with general corporate governance practices and management controls, and are clear*

*enough for use within the company. The problems with pricing in the company do not appear to stem from the lack of sufficient policy or procedure, but rather from the lack of adherence to the set policies and procedures.” (Consultant Report, 2008)*

The report continues to describe the pricing procedure as outlined in the pricing policy.

*“In accordance with procedures, Sales Representatives are required to use spreadsheets (in an up-loadable format) for customer prices. Prices are sent<sup>15</sup> to Customer Service to update in PRISM<sup>16</sup>, but often these are in the text of e-mails rather than the required spreadsheet. Customer Service has no real way of verifying authorization or even if the price is according to the pricing policy at all. (in addition, the use of Customer Service for price updates is a questionable separation of duties since they are also responsible for entering customer orders).” (Consultant Report 2008)*

The report further corroborates the issues raised by the external auditors related to a method of control or checks to validate whether or not the prices that had been quoted to customers are in alignment with the pricing policy.

*“According to the BU<sup>17</sup> managers, the check of whether prices are in line with policy is done once a year, in preparation for the annual price increase. While this may be more practical than checking prices before they are quoted, it has the disadvantage of being too late to correct without seriously upsetting the customer. In addition, the number of prices to be checked is huge, making a complete analysis nearly impossible during the time constraints of the price increase process....Although the authorization guidelines for prices and discounts are clear, there is no method of control in place to verify whether*

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<sup>15</sup> Via e-mail

<sup>16</sup> The company ERP system

<sup>17</sup> Business Unit

*prices quoted to customers and distributors are within the limits allowed.”*  
(Consultant Report 2008)

This process as described by the consultant was validated during interviews conducted with the Product Managers about the annual price increase. While the increase itself is excluded from this study, several of the processes used in its execution overlap with daily pricing management and are included. The checking of prices for compliance to policy is one of these processes.

*“it is always the product managers who always check to see if sales has done a good increase and the upload is checked by IS manager and the product managers or the coordinator if issues.”(PM 4- Ingrid)*

*“We have the in the procedure that the Business Manager is responsible for this part then the Product Manager and the Sales Specialist. But we have that only in the procedure let’s say. I think we have to use it also. And have it also in our systems. During the year every sales specialist makes a new net price, we have to add it manually; admin in Customer Service adds it into the system. But before they can add it needs approval. But right now they have a price but do not know what authority needs to do the approval. So they send it to PM and we need to do the margin checks to see which functionality needs to approve the price...We receive more requests for the price approval than we need... There is no owner, and we never had any other authorities. I am a Product Manager for the Papa business, if I send something to the Sales Specialist for the Alpha, why should they listen to me....There should be an owner of the project and this person has the authority to change things and has the ability to say to everyone in this organization that we have to do it like this.” (PM1- Helen)*

## **Actualization of my Role as the Pricing Manager & IT Project Lead- Translation Two**

**Move one – Capturing other’s interests** (Latour, 1983); **or Problemitization** (Callon, 1986); **or Localizing the global** (Latour, 2005a)

*In both the consultant report and corresponding interviews the issue of control arises. Though a pricing policy and procedures had been created, they were again identified as ineffective due to their inability to exert agency or control over other actors within the network; specifically the external sales force. There was no clear owner of the process, no system which forced adherence and no method of verifying whether or not policy and procedure had been followed. This meant that even within the framework of a company compliant policy, because it had not been made actionable, it continued to be a non-actor and the actors who were able to exert agency were members of the external sales force. The external sales force had the freedom to set prices at will and were able to bypass the policy and procedure with little or no repercussions for their actions. This empowered them and gave them agency over the other actors; Product Management, Customer Services, Business Unit Management, the Pricing Policy and the ERP system. As long as there was no mechanism in place by which the pricing policy could exert its control over the external sales force, they remained in control over company pricing (Latour, 2005; Clegg, 1989; Latour, 1986; Latour, 2005a; Law, 1986).*

*The solution to this issue of non-compliant pricing recommended by several product managers was for someone to be made the owner, as is shown in the interviews above. There is no mention of whether or not the policy should be changed, a different pricing management system should be put into place or if the process should be adjusted. The policy was deemed to be sufficient by the business, and the issue of non-adherence to the policy was something that should be solved through hierarchical authority.*

When I received the pricing policy and process in 2010 it was considered by the business to be adequate and appropriate. Thus, there was not an internal requirement to make changes to the policy. The policy's purpose was twofold; 1) to define the approval path required to offer special pricing (known in the company as net prices) to customers, applied at an individual product level and 2) to describe the approval process required to approve and enter special prices into the company ERP system. The policy had been in place for 6 months and all members of the commercial organization purported to follow the policy and procedures as indicated. However I was consistently told about two issues; 1) that non-compliant prices would mysteriously appear in the system or 2) prices that had been agreed with customers were not in the system at the time when customer orders were received causing delays. Furthermore, I was also told that it was not possible to track or trace adherence to the policy through the existing company systems. Use of and adherence to the policy was conducted through communication tools such as e-mails and phone calls, making the submission, approval and upload process almost impossible to trace. As I continued examining the policy I interviewed my colleagues about their experiences with the pricing policy and procedure.

*"Yeah I mean sometimes it was documented through spreadsheets, e-mails and more documents but if you wanted to find out what's [Indiscernible] [0:07:33] actually was operates let's say one specific net price, first of all you are lucky if you could find a deck." (Financial Director-Harry)*

*"Yeah, long communication right and not so traceable so you couldn't try[check] this very well." (Customer Service Representative- Kaity)*

*"Yeah there wasn't a documenting process...No. No there wasn't and there definitely no systems to support that. I know you know some people were doing it according to the procedure and made it work so in case don't feel any [indiscernible] [0:04:21]flexible."(Sales Manager - Mark)*

*"Yeah there was a pricing policy and documented in the ISO system and in that policy was defined who was allowed to approve what special price and I think the means were excel documents...Were filled out by the requester who could be a sales person or business joined manager. And then and the form was sent*

*to appropriate approver and we could just send through their customer service after approval, then after approval it was sent to the customer service and they filed the form and they entered the price in an open system pricing system.”*  
(PM)

As I listened to my colleagues corroborate the Audit and Consultant Reports all I could think to myself is “how is it possible for an international company in this day and age to work in such a haphazard manner?” To me it seemed absurd that my colleagues, though able to describe the issues with the process, also seemed to be content with its shortcomings. It was only during conversations with newer company members that the lack of formal processes, systems and procedures was discussed as a concern. The consultant recommends steps for Aspen to take to create transparency and traceability in the pricing processes.

*To fix the problem, the company will need to (1) put checks into place, and (2) enforce adherence to policy and procedures with appropriate consequences and disciplinary action for non-compliance. Adequate controls... to rein in price erosion.* (Consultant Report 2008)

The company revised their pricing policy accordingly and Harry searched for other methods to create the transparency and controls required by the External Auditors.

***Actualization of my Role as the Pricing Manager & IT Project Lead-  
Translation Two***

***Move one – Capturing other’s interests*** (Latour, 1983); ***or Problemitization*** (Callon, 1986); ***or Localizing the global*** (Latour, 2005a)

*Once again Harry and the Aspen Company respond to the requirements set by the external auditors, which were further reinforced by the findings of the External Consultant. In bringing in an external consultant, Harry was able to raise the awareness of the issue and translate that issue into a problem* (Latour, 2005; Latour, 1983; Latour, 2005a).



*He had added another actor into his network, the consultant, who agreed with the auditors and in doing so, gave further credibility to the issue of non-adherence to the pricing policy. This increased credibility was translated into agency when the pricing policy was once again updated in accordance with the advice given by the consultant report. However, the issue of translating the policy into something which could exert agency over the external sales force remained an issue, which was what initiated the search for further methods. Harry had not yet been successful in localizing the global (Latour, 2005a), translating the macro into the micro (Latour, 1983).*

It is in the time period of 2008, almost 3 years after the problem was first identified, that Harry became aware of a possible technical solution to the pricing management problem. There was an IT system being used in the USA offices that provided the visibility and traceability that was required to solve the audit problem. It is at this stage that the actors who would participate in the implementation are identified in the form of a project team, specified on the project charter document; which is also an actor [as will be explained in the following section]. Callon (1986) defines this process as the 'inter-definition of the actors' (p.204), whereby the set of actors who would work on resolving the problem are identified and defined.

### **Inter-definition of the actors**

#### **Project Initiation–Phase 1**

The decision to move forward with the IT tool implementation was made formal and actionable on 1 October 2008 with the development of a project charter. This was an internal company document by which various projects were tracked and traced from initiation to completion by the Management Team. The project was given a name, its context and purposes were defined, along with the quality and quantity of the intended outputs. Human resources were assigned and a timeline was outlined. The name of the project was 'New Pricing Policy' and

under this umbrella the context, purpose, quality and quantity were defined as follows:

*Context: Company does not have a pricing policy which is adhered to properly.*

*Purpose: Have Pricing Policy in compliance with audit rules*

*Quality: A policy that reflects business requirements and is not complicated and easily facilitated.*

*Quantity: Develop and implement on-line pricing quotation system for Europe.(Project Charter, 2009)*

The project charter explicitly states that the problem is a lack of a pricing policy which is non-compliant with external audit rules and is not adhered to by company members. This need resulted in the selection of the IT system for implementation. Had it not been for the pressure of external audit rules, the need to implement an IT system to formalize the process used for providing price quotations would not have existed.

***Actualization of my Role as the Pricing Manager & IT Project Lead-  
Translation Two***

***Move one – Capturing other's interests*** (Latour, 1983); ***or Problemization*** (Callon, 1986); ***or Localizing the global*** (Latour, 2005a)

*The project charter explicitly states in the first line, project context, the problem that my boss Harry has been assigned to resolve; lack of compliance to the company pricing policy. In this statement Harry has defined the problem and through the use of a project charter document, introduced another actor, the project charter. The charter tells us what the problem is, what the solution is and how that solution is to be achieved. Through its creation and the establishment of a project team the project charter is made an actor and is able to exert agency as people respond to it and it is translated into action by the project team (Callon, 1986; Latour, 2005a).*

*The objective of the project is to “have a pricing policy in compliance with audit rules’. This objective reveals that it is not due to internal company requirements that a new or revised pricing policy is required; rather the need has been created by a requirement to adhere to external rules. This reveals that the body or actor who is exerting agency is the external auditing firm, or rather the negative advice they had given in the audit report.*

*If they had not identified the pricing policy and procedures as an issue, then it would not have been an issue. At the moment that the company issued the project charter with the text, in compliance with audit rules, they accepted and submitted to the agency of the auditors (Clegg, 1989). Furthermore, they [the company] translated the recommendations of the auditors and external consultant into action. This made the audit report and the consultant report actors within the network and provided the conditions for them to exert agency.*

*The last line of the project charter further reveals the alliances which are being made between the project sponsor and other actors who had not been previously active within the network in situ. At the time the charter was written, there was no online quotation and pricing management tool for Europe. This actor did not exist within the network. However, in identifying that this was a requirement of the project, Harry, the project sponsor, made it known that this actor would be introduced. He does not give the actor any further defining features but has already allied himself with this actor through the identification. It is in a subsequent document that the identity of this new actor is made known and it is rendered active.*

On April 6, 2009 an RFIS form, Request for Information Services, was issued by the project executive of the New Pricing Policy project to the Information Services team in the US head offices, requesting technical support for the implementation of the IT tool. The objective of the implementation of IT for Europe was defined by the project executive in the RFIS as follows:

*Since 2/3 years we have an issue in our Management Letter from [external auditors] that needs to be solved: we do not properly authorize our special prices conform with the Pricing Policy. In our search for such a system to facilitate this, [IT tool] crossed our path. As far as I understand this is a well working tool for [US]sales, and we do not want to re-invent the wheel in Europe.*  
(BV Request for Information Services, 2009)

The intended benefits of the implementation of the tool were defined as:

*A globally working system. Copy exact kind of working procedures. A real benefit would be that we would replace a procedural spreadsheet authorization system (with potential human error and likely mistakes) with a fool proof system.*  
(BV Request for Information Services, 2009)

When I asked Harry the Financial Director about the project origins his response was:

*“We tried to set our structures and we have been working on structures but they were...never implemented and the commercial group did not want to implement it because well commercial people want to be as free as possible and of course, if you put in structures that’s not what they like. But in the end I really had an issue and then one of the reasons why I thought hey what can we do to improve this? and seems to have the [IT] system in US, I forced the organization to have it implemented. And that’s why my role became more dominant in establishing and getting [IT] for us.” (Financial Director- Harry)*

Once the project charter had been written and approved the project New Pricing Policy appeared to be ready for kick-off and start. However the project went through several delays before it was started. Upon examining e-mail communications between the project owner and the head of IS services at the US offices the main cause for the delay can be deduced as a resource issue. At one time or another the human resources required from a technical aspect

were not available from either the US offices or the Dutch offices. It was not until early 2010 that the project would progress beyond the start date phase. This is when my direct involvement with the project began.

***Actualization of my Role as the Pricing Manager & IT Project Lead-  
Translation Two***

***Move one – Capturing other's interests*** (Latour, 1983); ***or Problemitization*** (Callon, 1986); ***or Localizing the global*** (Latour, 2005a)

*Through the use of the Project Charter and the RFIS, my boss Harry attempted to make the Pricing Policy and IT tool indispensable to the other actors in the network through the definition of a problem and a proposed solution to that problem. The text within the two documents and references to the external audit and consultant reports are the methods by which Harry worked to convince the other actors in the network that revising the pricing policy and implementing the IT tool used in the USA was the one and only solution to the problem. No other solutions were proposed or identified in the documents. The RFIS goes a step further in stating that the intended benefits of implementing the IT tool would result in a globally working system and that Europe would copy the working procedures used in the USA. It goes on to state that would be beneficial to replace the existing spreadsheet system. These statements identify the existing situation in Europe as being undesirable and not capable of solving the problem. By identifying the process in situ as inferior, the RFIS seeks to render the process in-actable, thus removing its usefulness and agency within the network. The project charter and RFIS document also identify the actors who will participate in the project and in defining who will participate, also excludes the actors who will not. The project team members will be further examined in the section, *interessement*.*

## **Becoming indispensable**

### ***Establishing an obligatory passage point***

The problem identified (the current pricing process doesn't work) and inter-definition of the actors (outlined in the project charter) are reinforced through the establishment/identification of an obligatory passage point, whereby the actors complete the task of making themselves indispensable in the network. The IT tool is proposed by the Director of Finance, as the management representative, to solve the problem of pricing management. The IT system then becomes the obligatory passage point, which reinforces the position of the actors. It forces other actors to pass through it to enter pricing into the PRISM system, which in turn forces them to accept the policies set by management as outlined in the Pricing Policy. *What occurs at this point is the re-definition of the IT tool as an actor in the network as opposed to a supporting system.* While other human actors are identified in the project team, it is the system which becomes the mechanism through which all of the actors in the network must pass. Through the use of the project team and project plan, the actors involved in resolving the pricing management problems are defined and their interactions or alliances (Callon, 1986) are outlined. The Pricing Policy will be revised by the project team, the Policy will be entered into the IT system which will execute the policy, and the project team will test the functionality of the IT system and deliver it to the rest of the organization who will use the tool. The goal of the project is to force adherence to the Pricing Policy and create transparency in the processes used to do so. However, it cannot be assumed that because the actors and their alliances have been identified that the desired goals would be achieved. Rather, this proposed network was not yet locked into place, it was a proposed process which needed to move through the next step of translation, defined by Callon (1986) as *interessement*.

## **Interessement**

### ***Locking allies into place***

In the stage of interessement a series of methods are used to lock the allies into place (Callon, 1986). It is at this stage of the process that any competing networks are identified and destabilized through the same methods which are used to solidify and strengthen the alliances proposed during interessement (Callon, 1986; Clegg, 1989). The methods of interessement are unlimited (Callon, 1986) but the overriding goal remains the same, encouraging or seducing the actors identified during problemitization to form the alliances proposed. This requires an interruption to be created between any other existing networks, known as competing networks.

### ***Competing (existing) networks***

There was a series of networks in situ at Aspen prior to the IT implementation and during the problemitization stage. In previous sections I have described my own experience and observations of these networks in action, providing the necessary traces to make the network visible. The first network that became visible to me was the one between the three Product Managers Helen, Henrietta and Ingrid. The rituals they performed, such as the lunch ritual, demonstrated and reinforced the strength of their bonds, which extended across decades and outside of the workplace. The second network which was visible was the one between the Business Unit Managers and senior management. Though outwardly they didn't appear to function as a cohesive unit, during the M&S meetings, they would make decisions as a whole in collaboration with the General Manager and Director of Finance. The third network was that between all of the Product Managers. In conversations and during interviews the Product Managers would refer to themselves as a unit, regardless of the Business Unit to which they were attached. The fourth network which had been established through the project roles was the one containing myself, my boss Harry, the Pricing Policy and the IT system. As the project sponsor and lead, Harry and I had allied ourselves with each other with the project New Pricing Policy, which

also allied us with the IT system. The fifth, sixth and seventh networks were those comprising of the Customer Service Representatives, the Sales Representatives and other support functions (Finance and Information Services). These networks were reinforced through their formal reporting structures and similarities between functions. There was also an eighth network which consisted of the 3 Product Managers Helen, Henrietta and Ingrid and the Manager of Information Services, Henry. Due to their long involvement in working together on the annual price increase, they had an established rapport in working together.

### ***Locking the allies into place or Destabilization of existing networks***

To gain acceptance for the solution of revising the pricing policy and implementing the IT system, it was necessary for the network consisting of me, Harry and the New Pricing Policy Project to destabilize the other in-situ networks. We needed to demonstrate that our solution was the best and only solution to the problem. Callon (1986) defines this stage as *Interessement*, wherein other existing networks are destabilized and allies for the solution are locked into place. This results in the actors of the one stable network becoming indispensable to the others. It also creates the obligatory passage point, the gateway through which all others must pass in order to benefit from the solution and solve the problem (Callon, 1986; Callon & Law, 1988; Greener, 2006; Latour, 1983; Latour, 1986; Law, 1986).

The *interessement* methods, or methods to destabilize existing (competing) networks (Callon, 1986), deployed during the IT implementation included; the use of a cross-departmental project team, revisions to the existing Pricing Policy and the forcing of the Go-Live in the face of opposition.



***Actualization of my Role as the Pricing Manager & IT Project Lead-  
Translation Two***

***Move one continued– Capturing other's interests*** (Latour, 1983); ***or Interessement*** (Callon, 1986); ***or Localizing the global*** (Latour, 2005a)

*Although my boss Harry had begun the process of translating the recommendations and requirements of the external auditors and consultant into action through the creation of new actors in the form of the Project Charter and Request for Information Services, the translation process was not yet complete. Project teams had been established and competing networks had been identified, but these sets of alliances needed to be stabilized in the first instance and destabilized in the second (Latour, 2005; Callon, 1991). Thus, the macro had not yet been translated into the micro (Latour, 1983; Callon & Latour, 1981; Latour, 1991).*

*The scale still needed to be changed in order to not only capture the interests of the others, but to convince them that his problem of non-compliance to the company pricing policy and the solution proposed in the form of an IT system, was the one problem and only solution to that problem.*

**Method 1 – Use of a cross departmental project team**

The project team consisted of the Director of Finance Harry, me, the IT Manager Henry, Customer Service Manager Larry, Product Manager Cindy and Sales Manager Albert. Two additional project members from the US office participating on the project were the IT technical lead Jacob and system business owner Alice (Project Charter).

No two roles were represented in duplicate, thus splitting each member from his or her own organization and their existing networks. Harry was the project executive and I was the project lead, though neither of us was a member of the commercial organization. Though I was included in the commercial team on

paper, I reported to Harry, which meant that I represented his interests. Representatives from the commercial team were expected to look after the interests of their peers and included Albert as a Sales Representative and Cindy as the Product Manager. Cindy was PM Charlie 2 and hadn't been as actively involved in the pricing policy and procedures as her counterpart PM Charlie 1, Helen.

***Actualization of my Role as the Pricing Manager & IT Project Lead-Translation Two***

***Move one continued– Capturing other's interests*** (Latour, 1983); ***or Interessement*** (Callon, 1986); ***or Localizing the global*** (Latour, 2005a)

*In creating a cross-departmental team there was an attempt made at creating a new alliance between the project team that would override their departmental alliances (Callon & Latour, 1981; Latour, 1983). The establishment of a project team that excluded members who had previously participated in pricing activities also created a definitive split between the in-situ networks and the desired to-be network. The existence of a new group (the project team) was intended to render the old group (those previously involved in pricing) invalid or in-actable, thus removing them from the network. This would destabilize any alliances between that group and other groups and make it possible for the new group, the cross functional project team, to further extend their alliances (Callon & Latour, 1981). It would also validate the existence of the new group as they would be the one and only group who could define the problem and provide a solution to the problem, thus increasing their validity. The new group would be the only group that could perform the translation of making the prices set externally controllable (Law, 1986) and visible internally; localizing the global (Latour, 2005a).*

### Method 2 – Revisions to the existing Pricing Policy

The second interessement method used by the project executive [the director of Finance] and I as the project manager and the IT tool was the revisions to the existing Pricing Policy. As described in the previous section, one of the requirements for using the IT tool was adherence to its methodology which required Aspen to adapt its current Pricing Policy to meet the requirements of the system.. This is the stage when the tool begins to reveal its methods of interesting both the project team and the commercial organization. The Aspen company adjusted the Pricing Policy to meet the requirements of the system, solidifying the alliance between myself, the project manager and the system. This also forced the commercial organization to form an alliance with the system. While the pricing approval process was the same for all 4 Business Units, the discount structures and rules differed per business unit, which was a problem for the IT tool. It was only able to operate one discount structure for all products, regardless of business unit and required the approval paths for all 4 business units to be identical to one another.

#### ***Actualization of my Role as the Pricing Manager & IT Project Lead-Translation Two***

***Move one continued– Capturing other's interests*** (Latour, 1983); ***or Interessement*** (Callon, 1986); ***or Localizing the global*** (Latour, 2005a)

*When Harry and I revised the company pricing policy to meet with the requirements of the IT system, we took the translation of the global into the local one step further. We simultaneously subjected to the agency of the system by accepting its methodology and established the way in which pricing offered to customers in the external sales environment would be translated into something that could be viewed, reviewed, adjusted and entered into the company internal environment. We had identified how the global would be made local and the tool that would be used to do so (Latour, 1983; 2005a). In this identification we had excluded any other existing translation options, thus rendering those options in-actable within our network.*

Revisions to the pricing policy were first constructed by my supervisor and myself; he and I discussing what needed to be changed and I making the changes. It was not until we had a confident proposal that we presented our revised policy to the BUMs at the M&S meeting for their review. The presentation and response played out as follows: A copy of the document was provided to the group in advance of the meeting for them to review. Following the process described in the second section I was invited to attend the meeting to present and discuss the policy with the group.

*Initial reactions to changes to the policy were muted, while concerns were raised about the removal of the business unique rules, it was not an all-out NO. However, the audience to whom I was presenting was the individuals who expressed the desire to comply with requirements as necessary and simplify the pricing process. In reality, they were not intimately involved with the process and were not aware of the consequences changes to the policy would have to the daily working practices of their staff. I left with a few minor changes which were required to the document and continued on with my activities. (Reflective Journal, 2011)*

While working on revisions to the Pricing Policy and the IT project, I was also still performing my tasks as the Demand Manager. This meant that 50% of my time was dedicated to the IT project and the other 50% to forecasting activities. When I took on the responsibility for the IT implementation and the changes to the Pricing Policy, I expected to build on the momentum from the forecasting process. Therefore, when I presented the first round of changes to the Pricing Policy at the M&S Meeting, the reaction from the BUMs was in line with what I had expected. They were open to the idea of change, but they were not intimately involved in the process. The Product Managers were the group that had the highest level of involvement with the existing policy. Therefore, it was

to this group that the Business Unit Managers went to discover how 'realistic' the proposed changes to the pricing policy were.

### Method 3 – Go-Live Date

The third and final interessement method deployed to facilitate an alliance between the commercial organization and the IT tool was the crushing of any resistance against its implementation. Though resistance was encountered, the alliances between the Director of Finance, me and the IT system were stronger than the alliances between those attempting to stop the implementation, ultimately forcing them to accept the tool.

*My first encounter with the actual IT tool itself was through an online tutorial from the IT lead from the USA via a teleconference. He provided me with a link to the US based system and via the telephone walked me through the tool. Upon first glance it seemed like a fairly straightforward system. It would require some training to teach users how to work with it, but the projection was that this would be minimal. A half-day workshop was deemed necessary to bring users up to speed, walking them through a series of test examples accompanied by a manual which they would take home with them. When they needed support, I would be the first point of contact. Therefore, it was for me a requirement to become a system expert, learning the tool inside and out so that I could trouble shoot any possible issues before contacting IT services in the USA. This was important for two reasons; firstly because I was the business owner of the tool and secondly, there was a 6 hour time difference between the US and EMEA offices. If there was an issue, I needed to be competent enough to solve it myself unless it was related to the system codes or the interface with the ERP system. (Reflective Journal, 2011)*

Though the tool was relatively simple and easy to use, it was built to support the US pricing policy and processes, and this was reflected in its methodology. There was a series of steps users would need to follow in order to successfully enter, change or delete prices. If these steps were not followed in the correct order or a step was skipped, the process would not be executed and the pricing would not be entered or saved. This was a significant change for the user group, in particular the sales force. Until the IT system implementation they had been able to use a variety of methods; phone, fax, e-mail, spreadsheet, to communicate pricing changes to the customer service department who would manually enter those prices into the ERP system. With the advent of the IT system, these same sales persons were suddenly responsible for entering their own pricing into the system, and using a process which was new to them. They were forced to adhere to the process rules of the tool in order for their desired outcome to be reached.

***Actualization of my Role as the Pricing Manager & IT Project Lead-  
Translation Two***

***Move one continued– Capturing other’s interests*** (Latour, 1983); ***or Interessement*** (Callon, 1986); ***or Localizing the global*** (Latour, 2005a)

*When using the IT tool, external sales users are confronted with the requirement to follow the steps prescribed by the IT tool to enter their prices. They are forced to pass through the obligatory passage point to solve their problem, entering of prices into the company internal systems. Once the implementation has been completed, there will be no other passage point open to them, thus rendering the previous channels used void. This made it possible for my boss and I to reformulate the interests of the sales force in a new way; ‘If you wish to solve your problem of entering pricing into the company system, you must pass through our IT solution’ (Latour, 1983).*

The second user group whose working practices were changed by the tool was the Product Managers. They were also used to working with the existing informal processes of phone, fax, e-mail and spreadsheets, to review and

approve pricing requests from the sales teams before they were entered into the ERP system by Customer Service. The IT system followed another methodology entirely for pricing approvals. The byproduct of the implementation was a forced adherence to a working process, increased control over the commercial organization and the ability to trace variances in pricing by management.

***Actualization of my Role as the Pricing Manager & IT Project Lead-  
Translation Two***

***Move one continued– Capturing other’s interests*** (Latour, 1983); ***or Interessement*** (Callon, 1986); ***or Localizing the global*** (Latour, 2005a)

*The IT tool automated the pricing review and approval processes used by the Product Managers. Through the use of its matrix framework it became possible to filter prices to the correct product manager and reduce the amount of manual work. However, to realize these benefits it was necessary for the Product Managers to also adhere to the rules built into the framework of the system in the form of the Pricing Policy. The message from the tool to the Product Managers was, ‘I can solve your problem of visibility and control over external pricing, but you need to accept my new set of rules’ (Latour, 1983).*

The tool required users to type in or adjust the prices in the tool itself, following its methodology. Furthermore, there was also no way to bypass the tool by asking someone in customer services to load prices via the old method; the ERP system was adjusted to only accept pricing which had been transferred from the IT tool. Thus, there was no backdoor route which could be used to bypass the system. The system also worked off specific user names and profiles meaning the only person who could see and adjust a customer price list was the sales person who was responsible for that list; making it impossible to ask someone else to perform pricing activities. As the system administrator I had access to all levels in the system and was able to make changes to the user profiles, pricing approval levels and the calculations. My boss was my

emergency back-up in case I was ill or not in the office and a system administrator task needed to be performed.

*As the system administrator and project owner, I felt a responsible for the success of the system implementation. From a technical perspective I worked together with the IT team to develop and test the functional requirements of the tool. I organized and performed scenario testing myself and with the project team to test the system functionality, facilitated the data transfer process from the ERP system to the IT tool and set up all of the users in the system. This prepared the tool to run. From a business perspective I was the liaison or the face of the tool to the user group, the commercial organization consisting of Product Management, Field Sales, Business Unit Management and Customer Services. (Reflective Journal, 2011)*

***Actualization of my Role as the Pricing Manager & IT Project Lead-  
Translation Two***

***Move two– Moving the leverage point*** (Latour, 1983); ***or Interessement towards Enrolment*** (Callon, 1986); ***or Redistributing the local*** (Latour, 2005a)

*When I assumed the role of the IT system administrator, which was a subset of my role as IT project lead, I became the face and voice of the system; I became the spokesperson for the IT system (Latour, 2005). I was the user who was able to make programing changes within the system, to test the system, to load data into the system; the user who was able to exert agency over, within and through the system. I was the owner of the translation process the system performed and the gatekeeper of the obligatory passage point. This role made it possible for me in my role as the Pricing Manager/IT Project Lead/IT System Administrator to further change the scale of the macro to the micro, to re-formulate the translation into 'If you wish you solve your problem of entering pricing into the company system and adhering to policy, use my system because that's where the two meet. It is in my office, where the macro is made micro' (Latour, 1983).*



As the Go-Live date approached, I sent out weekly updates about the IT Implementation to the user group about the status of the project and what to expect as the Go-Live date approached, planned for 1 September 2010. To prepare the commercial organization user trainings were organized, either as a group workshop, one-on-one trainings or via web and telephone. Through the months of July and August 2010 I traveled to various team meetings and hosted in-company workshops for the various teams. Everyone was provided with the user guides I had written, specific to their job function.

*Through the course of the project and in the performing of the tasks of becoming the system administrator, trainer, user help desk and author of the revised pricing policy, I had firmly established myself as the IT person for our organization. The tool had become an extension of me and I an extension of it. By becoming the spokesperson for the tool I had also become a spokesperson for the management rules it enforced as well. This association would ultimately have consequences upon the relationship that I had with the members of the commercial organization. The first sign of these consequences was to manifest itself the weekend before the Go-Live date in the form of an e-mail sent by the Product Managers to their bosses, the BUMs. This event was one which would have a significant effect on my relationship with my colleagues and is one of the contributing factors which led to my decision to ultimately leave the firm. (Reflective Journal, 2011)*

On the 17<sup>th</sup> of August, 2010 the training for the Product Managers was held. During the training they raised several concerns about the tool not being able to meet some of the unique requirements of the EMEA business. I assured them that while not all requirements could be met, there were ways to manage the issues which were raised and reiterated the purpose of the implementation. The issues they were raising were not included in the scope of the project and I left the training confident that all existing/potential questions had been answered. However, I would soon discover that the Product Managers were not in agreement and were about to attempt a coup to postpone the project.

***Actualization of my Role as the Pricing Manager & IT Project Lead-  
Translation Two***

***Move two– Moving the leverage point*** (Latour, 1983); ***or Interessement towards Enrolment*** (Callon, 1986); ***or Redistributing the local*** (Latour, 2005a)

*At this point in the project I had fully assumed my role as the IT system spokesperson which completed the actualization of my role as the IT Project Lead. I was the system, the system was me and all that remained was the final act of intressement to fully convince the other actors within the network that the system and I were the only solutions to the problem at hand. Though we had crystalized our bonds with each other, we had not fully convinced the members of the commercial team of our value. We still needed to de-stabilize the competing network of the product managers and convince them of our validity. In removing their concerns from the project scope, my boss, the IT system and I had already made an attempt at invalidating those concerns. They were not a part of our problem, non-compliance with audit requirements, which for our alliance was the one and only problem. We needed to convince the Product Managers to accept this problem and its solution for our translation to be complete. At this stage, they had not yet been convinced, which necessitated another method of interessement to be deployed.*

About 4-4.30 pm on the afternoon of Friday, 20 August 2010, as I was preparing for the data transfer activities and a final training scheduled in the coming week I was [unofficially] informed that there was a problem. The BUM Analytical came into my office and asked if I was aware that the PMs had sent an e-mail to their managers[the BUMs] expressing their concerns with the IT tool and pushing for the Go-Live, planned for 1 September, to be postponed until January of 2011. I informed him that I was not aware of this and asked him to walk with me the office of my boss, the Director of Finance, so we could talk with him. My boss asked the BUM to forward us the e-mail so that we could

read through it and decide upon a course of action. The mail is shown below, anonymized to protect the identities of the parties involved.

**“From:** BUM 2  
**Sent:** donderdag 19 augustus 2010 13:01  
**To:** Business Unit Managers  
**Cc:** # Product Management; Manager IS  
**Subject:** IT implementation

Dear BU Managers,

*We like to point out our concerns about the IT tool and the implementation of it at the same time as the yearly price adjustments process is running.*

*1. Pricing policy (in general):*

*In the current proposal for the new pricing policy a sales person gets authority to give a discount on products without any review or approvals as long as CTP is above 40%.*

*All sales persons are equal for all business and all markets. Commodities have the same level as specialties because the level is defined per person and not per business. Example PV-160 can be sold by all sales persons to all customers as long as CTP is above 40%.*

*2. Per September 1<sup>st</sup> we will start the price increase process and the implementation of a new system. We foresee a hectic period because the people involved do not feel comfortable working with the system.*

*Risk is that customer orders cannot be processed because pricing is not complete. This may cause rework and complaints.*

*3. Issue with price increase process in combination with IT for Ethanol containing products.*

*Price increase for the products which have a tax inclusive price. The price increase should be a % above the net pricing (excluding tax); Marketing guidance is a % on the pricing in IT which is an inclusive-tax price.*

*Consequence: All ethanol products have to be manually loaded in IT.*

*4. Issue with price increase for the products which have a transport inclusive price.*

*The price increase should be a % above the net pricing (ex-work Deventer price); Marketing guidance is a % on the pricing in IT which is a inclusive transport pricing for some customers.*

*Consequence: All transport inclusive prices have to be manually loaded in IT.*

*5. The problem how to handle the MPL/MRC change is not solved. For IT is it required to have the MPL/MRC change to be completed before 1<sup>st</sup> of September. In Prism it is only allowed to change per new FY.*

*Consequence: Net prices for the involved products will go to the wrong sales person. Again a manual action for PM and Sales.*

*5. In IT the price increase / marketing guidance is on mrc level. All exceptions on the marketing guidance are a manual change in IT for the sales group. With all the risk they miss one.*

*6. Clean up of not-used net-prices will require a manual action from the sales people. This must be done per customer per SKU.*

*Suggestions:*

*Handle the price adjustments process in the same way in Prism.*

*Postpone the implementation of IT tool till 1<sup>st</sup> January 2011 so that data uploaded in IT don't have to be immediately re-arranged as it will be the case when implemented on 1<sup>st</sup> September 2010.*

*Find a solution in the IT tool for the tax related and transport related issues as mentioned in 3 and 4.*

*Please, feel free to contact us if detailed explanation needed.*

*Helen, Henrietta, Ingrid, Carrie*

*When I read through the mail I felt the color drain from my face as my body went numb. The authors of the mail; to whom I had just given a training, with whom I had sat with at lunch, and who I had considered trustworthy colleagues, had not once hinted to me that they were planning to take such action. Neither I nor my boss was included in the mail. Neither were the 4 other Product Managers, leading me to question to this day whether or not they were aware of its existence or not. They had only sent the mail to their own managers and the IS manager, who also happened to report to my boss. He did not inform my boss or I of the situation. We had been betrayed and I was not only angry, but I was hurt as well. I couldn't understand how these people could do such a thing. I didn't understand why they had chosen to use this method to deal with the problem rather than coming to talk to me. However, it was not the time for emotions, rather the situation needed to be dealt with in a professional way. (Reflective Journal, 2011)*

***Actualization of my Role as the Pricing Manager & IT Project Lead-  
Translation Two***

***Move two– Moving the leverage point*** (Latour, 1983); ***or Interessement towards Enrolment*** (Callon, 1986); ***or Redistributing the local*** (Latour, 2005a)

*The mail sent by the Product Managers shows that their alliance had not yet been de-stabilized by our previous interessement methods. They were attempting to de-stabilize our network (my boss, the IT system and I) by raising other problems to be solved that were not included in the scope of the solution that we had presented. By communicating directly to the Business Unit Managers without our knowledge they were attempting to gain support and interest those actors to join their network rather than ours. Thus, our previous interessement methods of using a cross-functional team and changing the Pricing Policy had not been effective. The competing network not only still existed, but it was actively attempting to de-stabilize our network (Latour, 2005; Latour, 1983). We needed to deploy a third method which would render the network of the Product Managers unstable and discredit the problems they had identified in their communication.*

After conversing with my boss Harry his message was clear, we will not postpone the IT implementation. He asked me to write a response to the concerns and send it to him. He would make revisions and send the e-mail to the organization. The mail which was sent in response is shown below

***“From:***        *Financial Director Harry*

***Sent:*** *Friday, August 20, 2010 5:12 PM*

***To:***    *Hank, Clark, Paul, Charlie*

***Cc:***    *Helen, Henrietta, Ingrid, Tim, Raoul, Fred, Henry, Perry, Mark, Nicole, Larry*

***Subject:***    *RE: IT implementation*

*Dear all,*

*Please let me try to give you all a fair and clarifying answer to the items mentioned in the mail below I received through Tim. I will address them one by one. But let me also step back to re-iterate the starting point of the process.*

*The major driver for installing IT was not per se a business requirement. It was related to compliance issues Deloitte had raised to the organization already in 2006 (?). We “solved” it by revising our pricing policy, but just on paper. Audits showed that this was a nice policy, but not fully reflecting real life. In the meantime we also learned about MBI using the IT-system. We took the opportunity to globalize and upgraded the IT into the Global IT.*

*Now back to the points one by one.*

*1. Pricing Policy Concerns*

*The starting point for revisions to the pricing policy was to set all persons across each business at the same level. However, this is only the starting point. Each business has the ability to choose the CTP % for its own personnel. It is also possible to change these %'s after the Go-Live, if it is determined as necessary. I realize CTP is a new term we have to get used to, but also MBI uses it. Might support the global character of our company.*

*The risks associated with sales people cross selling products from other business units as they are today, will continue in IT. Though there are rules in the current pricing policy, the enforcement process is based upon an honor system of human executed checks and balances. There is no PRISM limitation on which sales person can sell which products. Thus, the same business rules that apply today to cross business selling will continue to apply in the IT environment.*

*2. Price Increase Concerns*

*The price increase process is a time of intense pricing work for various levels in the organization. Price Adjustment activities will not begin in IT until the 1<sup>st</sup> of October and will last until 1<sup>st</sup> of December. Loading of adjustments and changes will occur in IT with the support of the tools that have been provided in previous price adjustments.*

*3. Ethanol Products*

*The current issues/risks for Ethanol products that exist in the current Price Adjustment Process will not be resolved by IT. The current Price Adjustment Process also requires that Ethanol Products are manually manipulated outside of the standard spreadsheets and added back in. In IT, these prices will require the same amount of care be given as is done during the current process.*

*Marketing Guidance% changes in IT are loaded at the individual PRODUCT LEVEL, not on the MRC level. Thus, it is possible to recommend different %'s per product. It is not possible to give customer specific % changes. These changes are to be communicated to Sales using the spreadsheets to be*

*managed as exceptions. Customer specific recommendations will require a manual step by Sales, if they agree to use the recommendation.*

*4. Products with ex-works, or now DDU, Aspen pricing will continue to be managed in the same process outside of the system. Any % changes will need to be applied only to the product price and manually loaded. This is similar to the Ethanol tax issues.*

*5. Changes between MPL/MRC s do not impact Sales persons in IT. These changes apply only to the routing of which Product Manager will receive pricing for approval. The Sales person who is the primary contact for the customer will continue to be the primary contact. Cross-business sales must continue to be discussed and agreed upon as required.*

*6. The price increase in IT is done on the PRODUCT LEVEL. It is possible to assign different % changes for each product within an MRC or MPL. Customer specific changes at the Product level must be managed manually as advised via the spreadsheets from product management.*

*7. Clean up on not used prices is recommended in the price adjustment spreadsheets, but it is the responsibility of sales to remove them. This does not have to change with the transition to IT. There is also the possibility of support from the IT administrator to help manage these manual processes during the Price Adjustment. However, there can be a change, since IT allows you to put an end date to the net price.*

*The business processes, rules, limitations and challenges that exist in the current environment are not resolved by the IT tool. The same rules that currently apply for cross-selling between businesses must continue to be followed. I do realize that we should consider the adjustments on alcohol tax and Freight for the future. Also DCE/Altran will assist us (through the ProACT program) in how to tackle that item. But that is for the (near) future.*

*Next to all of this I want to stress that Nicole always will and can be of assistance and support!*

*Just to make it clear: **we will go live as of the 1<sup>st</sup> of September.***

*Regards,*

*Director of Finance & Information Services “(Harry)”*

*After reading the response sent out by my boss, I left for home that Friday evening with a heavy heart. I felt betrayed by my colleagues and was hurt by their actions. It was at that moment that I realized that, with the exception of my boss, I wasn't sure who in the organization I could trust. It was from that moment on that my relationship with my colleagues began to change. (Reflective Journal, 2011)*

## **Actualization of my Role as the Pricing Manager & IT Project Lead- Translation Two**

**Move two– Moving the leverage point** (Latour, 1983); **or Interessement towards Enrolment** (Callon, 1986); **or Redistributing the local** (Latour, 2005a)

*My role as the Pricing Manager/IT Project Lead /IT System Administrator was fully actualized during the deployment of the third interessement method, the e-mail sent by my boss to the Product Managers in response to their attempt to de-stabilize our network. By having me write the message my boss Harry validated my role as the IT system and project spokesperson and the agency associated with that role. Only I could speak for the network including the IT system, and in speaking for that network, only I could offer the solution to the now dual problem of pricing non-compliance and silencing a competing network. It became my task to silence the doubts and render the competing network unstable through the final act of interestment. My role possessed the discourse that was able to explain the complex relationships between the IT system, the Pricing Policy, the auditors, the external sales force, the Product Managers, the Business Unit Managers and company management. Thus, the translation became, 'if you want to understand how the IT system translates the pricing activities happening in the external environment into something that can be used internally then you need to talk to me' (Latour, 1983). In the act of writing a response to an e-mail I had fully actualized my role as the Pricing Manager and the various sub-roles to which it was connected (Brown & Middleton, 2005; Latour, 1986; Law, 1986). Furthermore, when he sent my words to the competing network that was attempting to de-stabilize the IT system network, my boss used his hierarchical agency to attribute performative agency to my role. The combination of my role as the spokesperson for the network including the IT system and the performance of my boss in supporting that role translated that role into one which was able to exert agency over the network and all of the actors within it.*



*By providing solutions to the problems presented by the network of the Product Managers, the Pricing Manager role had rendered those problems invalid and removed the conditions needed for that network to perform and gain new members. The actors were confronted with the need to either join the network of the IT system or to seek another set of problems that could not be addressed by the Pricing Manager and the network that role represented. This double movement of fully actualizing my role as the Pricing Manager and de-stabilizing the competing network of the Product Managers had created the conditions for the translation to progress into its third stage; enrolment (Latour, 2005).*

The following Monday when I returned to the office PM Ingrid caught me in the hallway and apologized to me for not including me in the e-mail. The reason given to me was that their concerns weren't related to me and what I had done; rather they were with the tool and the management that was pushing it upon them. While I smiled and said I understood, I did not. At that point in my mind the tool and I were interconnected and dependent upon each other. I was the system administrator, trainer, help desk, project manager, implementer; the tool was an integral part of my identity at the company. My success in the role of Pricing Manager was dependent on the tool going live and working properly. The success of the tool was dependent upon my ability to deliver it to the business. So, when my colleagues told me that their concerns were not related to me, only to the tool, they were unable to recognize how deeply connected the two entities were. If it hadn't been for me, there wouldn't be an IT tool, or so I felt.

It was through the 3 separate events described above that the roles outlined during the problematization stage were accepted by the organization and the alliances associated with those roles were solidified. Once the rebellion staged by the Product Managers had been crushed, the IT system went live on schedule and the organization was moved into the next stage of translation, enrolment.

## **Enrolment**

### ***Go-Live and Beyond***

In the third stage of translation, enrolment, the actors must choose to accept or submit themselves to the roles which had been defined during interessement. By pledging membership the actor accepts or submits its role in the network and by doing so severs all ties to other possible networks (Callon, 1986). Those actors who have established the roles for the others will then seek to use these roles to build alliances between the actors they have put into place (Clegg, 1989). These alliances can then be used to achieve the goals and objectives for which they were established (Callon & Latour, 1981).

The IT tool went go live as planned, though two days behind schedule due to a technical issue, on 3 September 2010. During the first month after implementation I sent out weekly e-mails with updates about the tool and helpful Tips & Tricks and performed the role of IT user help desk, providing answers to questions via phone, e-mail or in person. It was these actions which management attributed to the success of the implementation.

*“...basically you’ve done all this dirty work and I could sit back and see whether you were doing well or not. That’s how I moved on and I think what really was good is the whole process of how we implemented it, with more face to face trainings and helping people and not just pouring the system out over them but we’ve taken them by the hand. Okay now we have to implement it, this is what’s going to happen and we will help you and I think that took away a lot of the barriers and a lot of the resistance, also the psychological part comes into place.” (Finance Director-Harry)*

Once the Director of Finance mandated that the Go-Live date for the IT system would remain as planned, the organization was forced to accept the implementation of the tool. It was pushed upon them and the rebellion quietly dissipated, though I do not believe that it disappeared. Rather, it retreated

below the surface again, into the informal social network from where it came. However, the Go-Live did occur on time and the organization reluctantly yielded to the IT system. In yielding to the IT system the organization also yielded to the new Pricing Policy. The system performed the role of the enforcer of the Pricing Policy, and I fulfilled the role of the system spokesperson, by touting the merits of the tool, training the organization and managing the socio-technical interface. I had become the primary human interface with the tool, essentially telling it what it needed to do, but also conforming to its prescribed methodology. I had allied myself with the IT tool and became its voice in the company. Like the example of the puppeteers given by Latour (2005), though I technically pulled the strings, I also listened to the tool and followed its directions. Thus, we exerted agency upon each other and in doing so, strengthened our ability to exert agency upon the commercial organization.

***Actualization of my Role as the Pricing Manager & IT Project Lead- Translation Two***

***Move three- Moving the world with the lever (Latour, 1983); or Enrolment and Mobilization (Callon, 1986); or Connecting the sites (Latour, 2005a)***

*In actualizing my role as the Pricing Manager I had also undergone a translation process. At the start of the project I had been confronted with the problem of needing to lead the project and become the IT system administrator, problemitization. The solution presented to me was multi-faceted; 1. Accept the role, 2. Learn how the IT system worked, 3. Change the Pricing Policy to meet the system requirements and 4. Speak on behalf of the system during user trainings, in communications and as the system administrator. When I had accepted the job at the company in November 2009, it was inherent in the terms that I would assume the role, accept the problem identified and the solution to the problem. The interessement method used was my contract, as the role of Pricing Manager and the IT Project Lead role associated with it were included in my terms of employment. Enrolment occurred when I actualized my role as the Pricing Manager.*

*The final stage of translation, mobilization occurred when I began to perform on behalf of the IT system itself. I had been translated into Nicole the Pricing Manager; a role which encompassed the sub-roles of the IT Project Lead and IT System Administrator. In that role I was able to exert agency over all actors who were engaged in pricing activities within the company. I had translated myself from someone into a something when performing the Pricing Manager role.*

## **Mobilization**

### ***The network is activated***

The last and final step in translation is defined by Callon (1986) as mobilization, where the various roles and alliances are crystallized and put into action (Callon, 1986; Clegg, 1989). This is the set of methods or actions which are used by the actors who have designed the network to ensure that the participating actors will fulfill their roles as defined and adhere to the conditions set during the stages of interessement and enrollment (Clegg, 1989). It is during this stage that representatives or spokespersons are selected to speak on behalf of the various roles (Callon, 1986). This is the stage which began after system implementation and continued through to the end of the study.

At the post-implementation stage the various actors in the commercial organization began to perform the roles assigned to them by the IT system and the Pricing Policy. The Sales Force performed as the Sales Force was defined by the rules, Product Managers as Product Managers, Business Unit Managers as BUMs and so on. I also performed my role as the IT Administrator, serving as the socio-technical interface with the tool in the form of setting up users, adjusting rules, troubleshooting, performing the user help desk role and serving as the liaison between the US technical team and the EMEA user base. I was the communication vehicle for the tool, sending our weekly tips & tricks to the user base every week for the first 4 weeks post-implementation and reducing the frequency to every other week for the two months following. I was the voice

and the face of the IT tool for the organization and by performing this role I acted as the spokesperson for the tool. However, this was a role with hidden stakeholders. By acting as the spokesperson for the tool, I also became a spokesperson for the Pricing Policy, which by default made me the spokesperson for Management. The IT system had evolved to represent something more than what its initial purposes were. As was shown in the case account, as the organization went through a series of changes, management used the IT tool as a vehicle to exert agency from a distance. (Law, 1986) By performing the role of the IT spokesperson, I had then also become the spokesperson for management (Callon, 1986). It was not management however, that attributed these qualities to me. Rather it was the commercial organization's members who assigned me this role in the manner by which they responded to me when fulfilling the role of the IT spokesperson (Callon, 1998; Callon, 1986; Callon & Law, 1988; Brown & Middleton, 2005; Latour, 2005).

It was also through my own actions that I assumed and accepted this role (Callon, 1986; Callon, 1998; Latour, 1986; Latour, 2005; Callon & Latour, 1981). By allying myself with the IT tool and Pricing Policy during the rebellion stage, I had made a clear statement about with which actors I had allied myself. I had become the spokesperson (Callon, 1986; Latour, 2005) for the IT tool and by receiving support from management to force the project through; management had also acknowledged its alliance with me. I became the vehicle by which control was exerted over the organization, in the form of the IT system administrator. I followed the directions set by management and made adjustments to the IT system and Pricing Policy as directed. In my role as the Pricing Manager I also became responsible for communicating (Callon & Latour, 1981) and enforcing these changes (Callon & Law, 1988), becoming the right hand of management. As an actor, I had become one which was able to exert agency over others in the network (Callon, 1986; Clegg, 1989; Latour, 1986; Law, 1986). However, as the premise of ANT states, power is a concept which is performed, thus it was not power which had been given to me by management, rather it was in the act of carrying out the changes mandated that

I was exerting agency (Brown & Middleton, 2005; Callon, 1986; Latour, 1986; Latour, 2005; Latour, 1983; Callon & Latour, 1981).

***Actualization of my Role as the Pricing Manager & IT Project Lead-Translation Two***

***Move three- Moving the world with the lever*** (Latour, 1983); ***or Enrolment and Mobilization*** (Callon, 1986); ***or Connecting the sites*** (Latour, 2005a)

*As the various actors within the network began to perform in the roles assigned to them by the system, the translation process was completed. When Sales Managers entered their prices into the system their external/macro actions were translated into something that could be viewed and analyzed on a micro level. The Product Managers, Business Unit Managers and General Manager were able to view and review the prices within the tool and accept or reject those prices. When a price was rejected it was sent back to the Sales Manager for revision and was not transferred into the ERP system. Thus, the IT system not only made the global local, but it also allowed the Product Managers to exert agency over the global. It solved their problem of visibility and ownership over prices set by the external sales force. But to solve this problem they had to submit to and perform the roles defined for them within the system. In role as the Pricing Manager I had made it possible to change the scale and reverse the macro/micro forces related to pricing management for the Product Managers, Business Unit Managers and senior management. This entered us into a new stage of the translation which they understood as 'we accept your methods and displace our own so that we can use your methods to reach our own goals' (Latour, 1983). The glue holding this translation in place was adherence to the methods defined by the IT system which were based upon rules of the Pricing Policy. It was only through adherence to this set of rules that the goals of the internal company management could be reached. Thus, the translation itself and the actors had been entered into a self-sustaining system.*

*The translation of the macro to micro and then the reversal of the ability of the micro to exert agency over the macro would only be true if the actors adhered to the roles defined by the IT system. The IT system would only work if the actors adhered to its methodology, which allowed it to perform the translation.*

*Thus, the system needed the actors and the actors needed the system. Furthermore, without me loading the rules of the Pricing Policy into the IT System in my role as System Administrator, the IT system would be unable to perform its translation. Without the IT System and its Implementation, which necessitated the need to revise the Pricing Policy, it would have been impossible for me to actualize my role as the Pricing Manager, and facilitate the translation required to solve the initial problem of audit non-compliance because of one problem or need that the translation takes place, but the translation is the result of a series of smaller micro translations taking place as one problem is translated and its solution gives rise to another problem.*

*This raises the question, when is the translation complete or rather, is the translation ever complete? And if it is never complete, then how can one argue that any role is ever completely actualized? Did I ever truly actualize my role as the Pricing Manager or was I merely engaged in a series of translations which went on into infinity? The answer to these questions lies in the next section, which addresses the issue of durability of the network (Callon, 1986).*

## **Durability of the Network**

### ***Will it last***

In his presentation of the sociology of translation, Callon(1986) raises the question of durability of the network created between the scientists, scallops and fishermen. "Closure occurs when the spokesmen are deemed to be beyond question" (Callon, 1986; 220). Thus, merely moving through the translation process is not a guarantee that the network created will maintain its durability. It is only when the validity of the spokespersons and the network they represent

is deemed without question by the other actors in the network that the network is truly durable (Callon & Latour, 1981; Callon, 1991).

I left the company in 2011 one year after the IT implementation for reasons to be discussed in the next chapter. Thus, while I can provide my own reflections on how I perceive that the system functioned, this is a limited view. Though I was no longer an employee of the firm I remained in contact for the year following and conducted a series of interviews with organization members about their experiences with the IT tool. It is the information provided in these interviews that I use to describe the organizational members experiences post implementation.

In the months following the implementation the project owner, the Director of Finance, shared his thoughts on the benefits of the tool and its use from a management perspective.

*“And now I think a little more and more people are also seeing that the benefit of it plus for themselves it’s sometimes easy and they use just a tool to set a price If you look at it, in the beginning there was lot of opposition and now it has been implemented, I don’t hear nothing about it, and hearing nothing in this case is a good achievement because it means it has been accepted or they just work with it.... in the past involved the product management to us, let’s say on pricing role was five per cent, I think it will be something like 10 or 15per cent on pricing and also for the even bigger deals, I think there’s more and more discussion now about pricing. So I think that has changed... There’s more uniformity in pricing...”(Finance Director-Harry)*

The reflections and perspective of the Sales department about the IT tool are that it has provided more visibility and traceability in pricing management. It also creates more conformity to the process and has increased the level of communication between the field sales force and product management.



*“You know I think may be we’ve gone through some transition where sales possibly had a lot more and maybe too much authority on prices where we’ve seen some as results some pretty nasty things ...yes it’s giving visibility but I don’t think it’s obviously improved from what it was okay ‘cause you had no visibility before and so now we’ve started having visibility.”*(Market Development Manager- Mark)

Sales Manager David corroborates the sentiments expressed by Mark related to the visibility and transparency of the process.

*“I think it has helped a lot because now it’s transparent. For example, for my business I can see exactly over the last year what has been quoted, which price is to which customers, which products is -- there’s one overview. I can see who has agreed, approved the prices and when. So, that information is now very easily accessible which is a big pro. That was quite tedious before to find that out. Actually, it was virtually impossible. So now, if I want to offer a new price, I have a much better basis to work on and for me in sales, it’s a big advantage.”*  
(Sales Manager-David)

Furthermore, Sales Manager Alex expresses that control over the pricing process is necessary, that it is not desirable that sales has carte blanche when offering prices to customers.

*“You have to have the program. You have to load your prices into a system. And, of course, in sales it’s not good if the sales specialist has the freedom to give all the price to the customers. Or it’s good if they have approval.”*(Sales Manager-Alex)

The view of the Customer Service department about the IT implementation is that it has improved the communication about pricing; the prices in the PRISM system are more accurate, approvals are done by the appropriate persons and it is possible to track and trace where a price is in the process.

*“Always better, it showed the communication way and it says and it’s responsible to introduce the price by themselves. So before they didn’t have this responsibilities because they had told us this is price and put the same and*

*now they have to do this by themselves so I think it's better to make them aware what they are doing.*

*And the approval of the product management of the director of it is good, all mandatory to the right person. And you can see – you see what is pending the request so if you don't get something - sometime you can see of this is yes or not it stuck in the system or not and if the prices are about the level which can be will not bad, but below so to know then the system reject them also, so block them, so it's not so easy to make the low prices.”(Customer Services Representative- Kate)*

The view of Product Management about the IT system after implementation is that it provides more visibility in the pricing process and has stimulated more communication between the sales force and the product managers. This allows for more control over the prices which are offered to customers, which should improve margins.

*“The IT forces the whole process to get more visible up here what prices are offered to the customers, who's dropping the price quantities. Expiration dates also have set in the system...in the system and makes it more transparent...”(Product Manager- Cindy)*

*“Yeah what they should do is first talk to us say I'm going to propose a new price. That's the idea that they are informed and that's not just a matter of waking up oh new prices. So the IT message should not be a surprise.”*  
(Product Manager- Henrietta)

*“Yeah and in the pricing policy is also stated, what the sales need to provide the product manager to start a description for a net pricing. So we're not allowed to ask for a net price for just one unit...You need to add volume on market information etcetera, before they start the description with product manager they need to have a price suggestion and then you can have a description so the sales and product manager ...and description about what should the price be and if they are on agreement on the phone or an e-mail then they add it in IT....It's more and more, I prefer the IT”(Product Manager- Helen)*

*“I think it’s very good that we have one tool and that we have one system where all prices are in and it makes more clear which prices are agreed with customers.” (Product Manager- Ingrid)*

Reviewing responses of the organizational members about the IT tool and changes to the Pricing Policy gives the impression that both have been accepted. They indicate that the IT tool is helpful, the Pricing Policy is clear, the approval process has made life easier and the audit requirement has been fulfilled. It appears that the new social network which consists of the IT tool, revised Pricing Policy, Product Managers, Sales Managers, Customer Service Representatives and the Director of Finance has indeed been made durable. Due to my departure from the firm, it is difficult to ascertain whether or not my performance in leading the implementation was instrumental in creating this durability. However, as stated by Henry at the start of the section, in his opinion the multiple roles I performed during the implementation had an impact on the response of the organization.

### ***Preventing dissidence and disentanglement***

There are several challenges the organization faces with the IT tool, mainly related to the functionality of the tool. It is difficult to search for old prices and current prices (Product Management and Sales Managers), the length of the approval process and overnight batch jobs can cause issues with urgent pricing requests and customer orders.(Sales Managers, Product Managers, Customer Service Department). Changing old prices is also expressed as an issue by the sales force and product managers as this requires manual work (Product Managers, Sales Managers). The system can be overly bureaucratic, cumbersome and time consuming to manage (Financial Director, Product Managers, Sales Managers, and Customer Services Department). These are issues which Aspen will need to deal with in order to maintain the durability of the network so that the social ties created do not break down and dissidence ensue. In the dissidence stage the premise upon which the network was established is called into question by the actors (Callon, 1986) which can lead to disentanglement, the stage in which the actors who have demobilized

themselves from the previous, disenfranchised network seek to disassociate themselves from that network (Greener, 2006).

### **Chapter Summary**

This chapter presents the journey of the Aspen company and I as we moved through an IT system driven organizational change. Using a combination of thick description, excerpts from my reflective journal and quotes from participant interviews I have followed the actors as we moved through the four stages of translation as defined by Callon (1986) in accordance with actor-network theory (Latour, 2005). By using ANT I was able to break down the barrier between the social and technical to reveal the interaction between the human actors and the technological actors (Brown & Middleton, 2005) within the social network at Aspen. I show that it is through my deployment of mediators, objects and performances that I actualized the different job roles assigned to me by moving through two translations and in doing so defined both the networks in which I participated as well as my own role within those networks (Brown & Middleton, 2005; Callon, 1986; Hodgson, 2005; Latour, 2005; Callon & Law, 1988). My role actualization was further reinforced by the different responses of the organization to me as I performed my different roles (Callon, 1998; Callon & Latour, 1981).

Chapter 4 contains the presentation and analysis of the events as they occurred at the Aspen company. This presentation provides the reader with the context in which the change agent found herself which forms the bridge to the next, 'Discussion' chapter, where I further explore the consequences of this multi-role performativity on myself as the change agent. In Chapter 5 the change agent and researcher are examined to show how the events described in Chapter 4 affected the change agent and triggered the emergence of a new research self.

## Chapter 5 Discussion

*How is it that I have come to be in the situation that I am in? What has happened? What have I done or not done which has resulted in my situation? What steps have I taken to deconstruct one self and create another one? What are these other forms of self, other I's, other Nicole's?*

*I do not ask these questions out of despair, rather I ask them to create a framework for myself to trace the events which have occurred over the past 6 years in a structured way. This creates a map which I can use to follow my own movements around it. Latour (2005a) says "Follow the actors". In this story, it is my many selves or I's who are the actors. (Reflective Journal, 2014)*

### Introduction

In this chapter I use the events presented in Chapter 4 to explore the multiple versions of (my)self who performed the various roles examined in the study to answer the question; *How is the change agent affected by the experience of leading change?* The descriptions and analysis provided in the previous chapter provide the contextual frame in which I analyze myself in the various roles I performed. This frame sets the boundaries for the analysis, thus localizing the global and redistributing the local (Latour, 2005; Callon, 1986). Following my auto/ethnographic methodology using the combined methods of evocative interpretivism through the writing of emotional accounts (Doloriet and Sambrook, 2012); and analytic realism supported by an analytical framework (Anderson, 2006), I combine the use of reflective texts with the application of the approach to performativity in accordance with actor-network theory. I use texts produced during different stages of the study to illustrate how and when different selves emerge and examine how these selves engage with one another following the sociology of translation and discursive analysis. The use of these texts also introduces a new role into the study; my auto/ethnographic research self. It is through this self that I explore how the change agent is

affected by the experience of leading change. This results in three different versions of self that are presented in the chapter; the wanna-be positivist research self, the emerging auto/ethnographic self and the formed auto/ethnographic research self who is writing the thesis. These are the same three selves presented in both the methodology and findings chapters as well. The wanna-be positivist self is presented in the poetry tables along with the emerging auto/ethnographic self. The fully formed auto/ethnographic self is the one writing and speaking in the analysis and presentation of the interaction between the other two selves.

The chapter is structurally split into two sections; the first examining my research selves and the second examining my managerial selves, the movements of these selves occurred in tandem rather than sequentially. If I apply the 4 stages of the sociology of translation (Callon, 1986) to me during the course of this research, the interaction between the different roles performed are made visible and allow for the examination of the different versions of self presented.

## **My Research Selves**

### **Problemitization**

Problemitization is the stage where one, some or many of the actors involved attempt to make themselves indispensable to the other actors. This is through the definition of a problem and a proposed solution to the problem (Callon, 1986).

*A problem is identified and Inter-definition of the actors*

#### The first research self

When I began this study in 2009, I had been presented with two problems; an IT project that needed to be implemented at Aspen and a DBA research that was floundering. Both needed to be solved and I searched for different ways in which to deal with the two situations. The most logical answer was to combine

the two, using my IT project as the basis for the DBA research project. This solved the problem of a project and participant/data access for the DBA and provided a timeline against which I could manage both projects. In an ideal environment, I would be able to utilize my time, energy and resources more effectively and efficiently and finish the DBA on time or even ahead of schedule. The completion of the DBA would also help me to advance my career within Aspen.

Through the use of this argumentation, my initial research self convinced the other actors within my network that I had chosen the correct path. Through the use of language and behavior at Aspen and in the DBA program, this self further reinforced its position and thereby made itself indispensable to the other actors. If I was able to use my working activities for the research, I would have more free time. If I was able to follow the project timeline, I would be finished on-time. If, if, if..... This logic was further reinforced by the methodological choices I had made, explained in detail in the original Chapter 3 although subsequently omitted from the chapter 3 presented earlier. The initial research self was actively engaged in reinforcing these choices through the discourse and behaviors exhibited during meetings with my supervisors and DBA peers.

Due to the similarities between this research self and my managerial self (in this project the Demand & Pricing Manager), these two roles actively reinforced each other. These two instances of self [research and managerial] performed in a similar way, though the managerial self was better at following the self-imposed structure than the research self (Harding, 2008). Process and procedure are hallmarks of the field of Demand and Pricing Management and in the workplace, the managerial self performs according to expectations. The research self however, does not. This self, though using the discourse, was not actively performing in accordance to the rules. It was this lack of performance which created the space for the new research self to emerge.

### The second research self

When working on this thesis I was confronted with a series of latent emotions that I hadn't allowed myself to "feel" while I was working in the company studied. The resulting effect was that the writing process became a form of catharsis through which I finally talked about what had happened and how it had happened. However, even getting to the stage of writing was a process for me, as it required me to re-live what had occurred, and I found that to be a difficult and at times, impossible task.

In the year 2011-12 I felt like I was crawling my way through a marathon. Though my DBA had been limping along, it was only on a superficial level. I was going through the motions to make sure I met program requirements, but I was uncomfortable and unhappy. I felt disconnected with my topic, my research skills, my peers and the program management. Yet, whenever anyone would ask me how my project was going, I would respond confidently that everything was fine. So long as I kept on telling everyone else I was fine, I would be fine.

*I had become trapped in the need to do, the need to produce, to perform, to complete. The DBA was an obstacle that was to be overcome, and I was determined to overcome it via any means necessary. I was going to force myself to write no matter what. (Reflective Journal, 2014)*

I engage with the world through feelings and intuition rather than rationality and numbers. I first engage with the world around me and only then do I begin to look for ways to interpret it. This would lend itself to a different research approach than the one which I had adopted, which I failed to recognize at the start of my project. I was drawn to the post-modern/social constructionist ontology during our philosophy of research modules, but migrated away from it when confronted with the need to produce a research plan/proposal.



When designing my project I reverted back to what I knew from my own experiences rather than follow my instincts. By the time I had reached the summer of 2012 this disconnect between myself and my research was resulting in what I can best describe as an identity crisis. I wanted to be the positivistic case study researcher I believed I should be; which was in direct conflict with the auto-ethnographer I actually am. This internal conflict began to reveal itself in the form of poetry produced in the early weeks of my summer holidays in 2012 as I sat down and attempted to force myself to write.

An example of this is a poem written on 6 Aug 2012 titled Circles. Adapting the analytical model of Harding (2008) to deconstruct the discourse, I present the poem in the left column, a decoding of what is (or is not) being said is found in the middle column and in the right column, an analysis of the stanza.

**Table 7 - Analysis Poem One - Circles**

<i>my words are trapped my lips sewn shut like a lost little squirrel who can't find a nut</i>	The words are there but I can't get them out I have no way of speaking I feel alone, lost, small I cannot find sustenance	It is in this opening stanza that the auto/ethnographer makes her presence known. She has something to say, but she's been silenced.
<i>in circles I go spinning round, and round chasing my tail nowhere to go</i>	I keep on re-hashing the same problem over and over again with no solution	Here the auto/ethnographer expresses her frustration in having no outlet, no voice, no means to participate.
<i>worn thin I am like an old piece of lace without any direction with lack of a place</i>	I am exhausted by this How I see myself, fragile lost, aimless I do not belong	The auto/ethnographer is tired, feels that she doesn't belong, that she is something which could disappear
<i>my mind races and races yet nowhere it goes round and round and round in these circles I go</i>	My thoughts continue but no words come I keep on missing the point, how do I do this?	Again frustration in having no method of expression, participation, no way of speaking.

After examining this poem 2 years later it becomes clear that the WHO that is doing the speaking here is my stifled auto-ethnographic voice. It is the voice that belongs to the auto-ethnographer who was tied up and hidden away by the wannabe positivistic researcher. It is in the first two stanzas that the identity of the speaker is revealed “my words are trapped, my lips sewn shut”. There is someone who wants to speak, but has been silenced.

This provides insight into another poem produced in July of 2012 which is titled Nothing. The original text of the poem is presented to the left, a decoding of what is (or is not) being said is presented in the middle column and in the right column, an analysis of the stanza.

**Table 8 - Analysis Poem Two - Nothing**

<i>I am nothing</i>	I am of no value.	By discarding my intuitive auto-ethnographic self, I have told her that she is of no value.
<i>I feel nothing</i>	If I am of no value, I also cannot feel.	My auto-ethnographic self is not allowed to feel. She is hidden.
<i>This is nothing</i>	I am in an empty place	My auto-ethnographic self does nothing, sees nothing, and experiences nothing. I have hidden her away.
<i>Why?</i>	A cry for understanding as to why this has happened	Why have I hidden my auto-ethnographic self away?

In my quest to “fit” into a pre-conceived academic mold, I had disenfranchised my auto-ethnographic self. However, this self did not go quietly into the night. It continued to speak out in the form of poetry, seeking to understand its own distress, which was my distress. Yet, in my then actual thesis itself, there was little insight provided into this distress. The source of it, the manifestations of it (the distress), acknowledgement that the distress even existed at all had been hidden from the outside world. Rather, when I did finally write, I wrote with a clinical, detached style, devoid of emotion.

## **Becoming indispensable**

### *Establishing an obligatory passage point*

An 'obligatory passage point' (Akrich & Latour, 1992; Callon, 1986; Latour, 1986) is a ritual, stage, process etc. as defined by the problem solving actors. It is only by passing through this point that the problem can be solved. In August of 2012, after weeks of fruitless efforts to write I reached the conclusion that I needed to make changes to my study. The journey I took to make these decisions is explained in the methodology chapter, with the final result being what you read now, an auto-ethnographic account using actor-network theory. Thus, the methodology of auto/ethnography was the obligatory passage point.

Acceptance of this decision also meant acceptance of my auto-ethnographic self and the departure of the wannabe positivistic research self. It also meant coming to terms with what I perceived as failures in my research process. This changing of the guard, as it could be called metaphorically, resulted in the following emotional poem titled Back to the Beginning; written on 30-8-2012 after changing my study from a case study to an auto ethnography using ANT- having to start all over again.

**Table 9 - Analysis Poem Three- Back to the Beginning**

<i>Down, down down I fall Further and farther into the rabbit hole Like Alice in wonderland I am Trying to make sense of it if I can</i>	The world has been turned upside down and I do not know what is happening.	In this first stanza I talk about falling down the rabbit hole, like Alice in Wonderland. By adopting an auto-ethnographic approach and using actor-network theory I had suddenly opened the door to a whole new world in management research. It was an unknown place to me, filled with many new concepts, theories, authors, methods.
<i>I am lost you see Lost within the depths of me Searching to find the sense somewhere Trying to figure out where is here</i>	I am searching for answers within myself as I try to make sense of what is happening.	Here I introduce the concept of self-reflection, looking into the depths of myself to make sense of where I have come in my research, the researcher I was becoming.
<i>Before I was so certain you see I knew this and what The when and the where I knew this is me</i>	I don't know myself anymore.	In this stanza I am grieving for the departure of the wannabe positivistic case study researcher. The person I wanted to be, but was not.
<i>Now it is all gone The page fades to white Like being in a room filled With nothing but light</i>	A metaphor for re-birth. Going back to the beginning.	With the departure of what I had been doing I was suddenly left with a blank canvas, the opportunity to start over, the uncertainty to start over.
<i>Back to the beginning I go The start of the road To begin all over again Like penance for my sins</i>	Having to start over feels like a punishment.	Again, the theme of starting over, anew, afresh. However, this is felt as both a blessing and a curse as I grieve for the work I had done.

While I was struggling with this research identity crisis, I wasn't allowing it to surface in my academic writing. I made distinct (conscious and unconscious) choices to keep my poetry and emotions out of my DBA thesis. Examining the reflexivity pieces I wrote at that time shows that while I had found my auto voice, something was holding me back from allowing it to speak freely.

An example of this is shown in an imaginary conversation I wrote in December 2012 between the 3 original roles engaged in the study (Pricing Manager, Demand Manager and Researcher).

What strikes me first about the discussion between the different roles is the latent anger expressed by the self in the role of the pricing manager. In the response to the statement made by the Demand Manager about the positive feedback she has heard about the IT system she replies:

*Pricing Manager: "yes, NOW people seem to be positive about the tool, however during the implementation, it was an entirely different story. While there was the normal resistance to the process, there was one particular event where the product managers ganged up and sent an e-mail to their managers trying to delay the implementation, a week before we were scheduled to go live. They didn't include me or my boss on the e-mail, rather they sent it from only 4 of them with their bosses and the IT manager in the cc. Consequently the IT manager also reported to my boss, which made it even worse."*

I, the Pricing Manager was angry about the way my colleagues behaved in the event described above. I was angry and I was hurt that they would behave in what to me felt like a stab in the back. I had just given training to this group of staff days before and none of them had come to me afterwards to express further concerns. Rather, they wrote it up in an email and sent it behind my back. I was hurt and I was angry and it was from that point onwards that I no longer trusted them. However, when describing the event I leave out the emotions because it was in that way that I could make sense of it. If I had let the emotions come into the account, I would have to deal with them, and I was not ready to do that. Furthermore, employing the concept of the two research selves, the use of a rational descriptive voice reveals that the self performing and writing up the reflection was the wannabe positivistic researcher.

When I examine the pieces written in that time frame what is striking is the clinical nature of the work. There is little to no emotion expressed by any of the roles speaking, even when they are recounting what I know to be emotional situations. The question which arises is why does this occur? Why is it that I, after acknowledging my auto-ethnographic voice, choose not to use it in a reflexive account?

The answer to this/these questions is twofold; 1- at the time when the pieces were written the specter of my wannabe positivistic case study researcher still lurked in the shadows and 2- a need to protect the selves engaged in the discussion. The wannabe self is then pulled out of the shadows and is asked to perform to protect the vulnerable auto-ethnographic self. Due to the two different research forms; one being rational and the other emotional, this allowed me to interact with emotional events in my research without having to engage with them. This is a tactic which is an artifact from my days of working in management. In management we are expected to perform as the rational manager, one who does not show emotion and makes decisions based on facts rather than feelings. Though you may be feeling many emotions on the inside, you never show them on the outside. Hence, when dealing with emotional situations in my workplace, which also served as the basis for my research, I utilized the same approach. Hence, it now seems only logical that I would do the same in the writing up of my research. If something felt too emotional, I called upon my rational research self to take over from the auto-ethnographic researcher.

The question then becomes, how is it possible for one person to write with multiple voices? If one individual can assume multiple roles with each role then being attributed to a self (or what I refer to as the I), then cannot each self also have its own voice which it uses to “speak”?

The answer to this question is one which has been explored in various ways. Derrida (1982) analyzed his own works through the use of the margin, employing a new space to allow for another voice to enter into the discussion. Ronai (1998) utilized a layered account, wherein the combination of the layers creates the whole; Mischenko (2005) used poetry and Humphreys & Learmonth (2011) used time phased reflection. I choose to employ the concept of polyphony as defined by Bakhtin (Shotter, 2008).

The term polyphony itself comes from the genre of music, wherein a piece is not composed of a melody and a harmony, rather there are two melodic lines which complement each other as they are played in tandem. Bakhtin (Shotter, 2008) built upon this concept, turning to the use of language in the works of Tolstoy to show how a complex story line could be told through a series of voices belonging to multiple actors. Hence, there is not one main narrator, rather there is a multiplicity of actors and voices who each play their own melody, but when combined comprise one complete piece.

When applying the concept of polyphony to the texts I was producing, it becomes evident that not only did I perform multiple roles during the course of my study, but that I also allowed each role to possess its own voice, which results in the emergence of differently written texts. This explains the differences in my writing during the early stages of my DBA as opposed to the later stages. Applying the ANT perspective on performativity, it becomes evident that there are multiple actors who are jockeying for position to be identified as the self, or what I would define as the primary self through the act of speaking. These selves are using the social construct which has been constructed through the writing of a doctoral thesis as the platform to engage with one another. One self is speaking/performing as the voice in the thesis and the other self is speaking through the poetry written in my journal. Both selves are using a different technical form in which to express themselves; one through a PC keyboard and the other with a pen and paper; but both are

actively performing within the construct created by my performance as a researcher.

The tension between the poems and other writings produced in the same timeframe reveals the way in which the selves construct and subject themselves to their identities through the discourse used (Callon & Latour, 1981; Latour, 1986). The wanna-be positivistic researcher assumed a detached, factual reporting voice which adhered to the traditions found in the hard sciences such as chemistry or physics. In the adoption of this voice, that self subjected to and therefore constructed its identity as the calm, cool researcher. Though I felt the tensions between the multiple versions of self, the one which would perform when in DBA meetings was this self. She assumed the discourse and behaviors associated with the type of researcher she wanted to be, therefore convincing those around her that she was such a researcher (Callon, 1998). Her identity was created by the performance.

Conversely, the auto-ethnographic self was also performing textually, but in a less visible way. She was subjecting herself to the role of the victim. Examination of the first two poems presented shows this self adopts a woe-is-me voice. She talks about how she has no voice, no value, that she is nothing. In expressing herself as so, then she also is of no value, has no voice and is nothing. She has simultaneously subjected to and created the identity of the suppressed victim, which is reinforced by the social construct created between the DBA thesis and the wanna-be positivistic researcher (Latour, 1986; Latour, 1991; Law, 1991; Callon, 1998; Strathern, 1996).

A textual turn takes place in the third poem where the writer is not the long suffering auto-ethnographer, rather it is the wanna-be positivistic researcher who puts pen to paper. The key to the identity of the writer lies in the third stanza, "*Before I was so certain you see, I knew this and what, The when and the where, I knew this is me*". The certainty and confidence felt by the self in her



own identity, which had been created and reinforced by the interaction between her and the research process has been altered in some way. The way in which it has been altered is not explicitly addressed in the poem, though a clue is given in the first stanza when she talks of feeling like Alice in Wonderland falling through the rabbit hole, trying to make sense of things. Chronologically this is when my flirtation with ANT and auto-ethnography developed into a love affair. In adopting a new and different approach to my research I altered the social construction in which my research was executed (Callon, 1998; Callon, 2007; Law, 2004). This alteration required my research self to perform differently, which in turn disenfranchised the wanna-be positivistic research self and enfranchised the auto-ethnographic self. This change, while not visible to the naked eye, revealed itself in the type of research texts I began to produce and the ways in which I engaged with DBA program management and peers. The auto-ethnographic self began to perform in my research by using the pc keyboard and speaking at Peer Review Workshops (Latour, 1986; Latour, 1991; Law, 1991; Callon, 1986; Strathern, 1996; Callon & Latour, 1981; Law, 1986). She talked openly with peers and program management about her concerns, challenges and uncertainties; which was in stark contrast to the previous years. As my 'new' research self began to perform, my 'old' self retreated into the wings and became less visible to those around me. However, she did not disappear or stop performing entirely. A series of poems produced during the subsequent timeframe reveal the voice of the disenfranchised wanna-be positivistic researcher as she struggled to participate in the new research construct (Latour, 2005a).

## **Interessement**

### *locking allies into place*

During interessement a series of methods are used to lock the allies into place (Callon, 1986). It is at this stage of the process that any competing networks are identified and destabilized through the same methods which are used to solidify and strengthen the alliances proposed during interessement (Callon, 1986; Clegg, 1989). The methods of interessement are unlimited (Callon, 1986)

but the overriding goal remains the same, encouraging or seducing the actors identified during problematization to form the alliances proposed. Thus requires an interruption to be created between any other existing networks, known as competing networks. Once the choice had been made to switch methods, the competing networks needed to be destabilized and the new ties crystalized. The intersement methods used by the new research self were to change the research methodology and to switch supervisors.

In November 2012 when I sat down and forced myself to produce a draft version of the thesis the existence of the two voices had already been made known through my poetic works. However, it was in the thesis itself that they came into direct contact and contrast with each other. As I wrote the first full version of this thesis, my introduction chapter adhered to an auto/ethnographic tradition, using thick description and personal reflections. Much of the content in the introduction to this final version was created at that time. Thus, it was evident that the auto/ethno self was performing through discourse, thereby influencing the social construct of the thesis itself (Callon, 1989). However, the second chapter, literature review, was written in the voice of the case study researcher, showing that this actor was also actively performing and influencing the construct. When constructing the third chapter, methodology, the two voices were brought into direct discussion with each other, as the chapter comprised of sections written during different time frames using different voices (Shotter, 2008; Learmonth & Humphreys, 2011) and those actors began to use references as artifacts (Callon, 1998; Callon, 1986; Latour, 2005a) to justify their existence and strengthen their position within the network. They were, in fact, attempting to interest each other, each one attempting to convince the other of its merits and destabilize the competing networks. For the auto/ethnographer its mission was to destabilize the existing network of DBA, case study researcher, Aspen, while the opposite was true for the case study researcher who was attacking the new emerging network of DBA, auto/ethnographer, Aspen (Callon, 1986; Latour, 2005). Textually this was demonstrated in a schizophrenic sounding chapter that read as though two different people could have written it. Furthermore, as I had described in previous chapters, during

this time I was actively conversing with a colleague who supported the emergence of the auto/ethnographer. As this self continued to perform, it (the self) was the research voice which earned praise while the case study research voice was not addressed at all. This active performance by another actor further reinforced the validity of the 'new' self and invalidated the 'old' self.

The second interessement method used by the auto/ethnographic self was to gain further support from the network of DBA program actors. After discussing the challenges I was facing in my work, my initial supervisor and I agreed that it would be useful for me to work more closely with Supervisor 2, whose expertise lies in the qualitative area. As I have described in the methodology chapter, the first time I was able to share my work with Supervisor 2, her response was, "You have found your voice!" This validation of the change in methodology strengthened the position of the auto/ethnographer (Callon, 1986; Latour, 2005). By telling me I had found my voice, she also gave the auto/ethnographic me a voice and in turn, devalued the voice of the case study researcher. The new construct of the DBA, auto/ethnographer, Aspen experience, had been performed and accepted by other actors within the network (Callon, 1986; Callon, 1998; Callon, 2007; Hodges, 2005; Latour, 1986; Latour, 2005a). The auto/ethnographer had demonstrated its ability to exert agency over the other actors in the network through the response to its discursive performance (Callon, 2007; Latour, 2005a).

This transition gave rise to another series of poems in which the 'old' self began to speak about the break-down of its network titled Black; written on 28-11-2012 while writing up my original first draft.

**Table 10 - Analysis Poem Four - Black**

<i>Shut the doors Turn out the lights I want each day To feel as endless night</i>	Shut out the world. I do not want to face the days anymore.	By switching from a case study to auto/ethnography, there is no room for the case study researcher anymore.
<i>No more sunshine No more smiles for you Just deep engulfing blackness Over and over, thru and thru</i>	Nobody wants to be with you anymore. You are not worthy to see the sun, nobody will share their time with you.	The other actors in the network have abandoned the case study researcher and joined the new construct created by the auto/ethnographer. The voice (self) acknowledges that the other actors have abandoned it.
<i>No more forward And definitely not back I want to all to be over For the world to go black</i>	There is no more forward path and it's not possible to go backwards.	The self recognizes that it can no longer move forward in the new construct. Its role has come to an end.
<i>Like two sticks in the sand Or trunks in cement Here it is I stand It is what is meant</i>	My time has stopped, and with it the possibility for movement. Acceptance that this is what is meant to be.	The self accepts its situation, it submits.

The stanzas in this poem are dark and gloomy as the case study researcher comes to the realization that the end has come to its existing construct. The performances of the emerging auto/ethnographer are convincing other actors within the network of its validity and ability to solve the problem of producing a DBA thesis (Callon, 1986; Latour, 2005). Through the use of discourse the auto/ethnographer has created its identity and subjected to it (Callon & Latour, 1981; Callon, 1998; Latour, 1983; Latour, 1986; Latour, 2007) and in doing so, has forced the case study researcher to do the same. This is demonstrated textually in the poem above as the case study researcher laments its situation. It is in the last stanza that the case study researcher admits and subjects to the auto/ethnographer (Callon, 1986; Clegg, 1989; Callon, 1991), “*Like two sticks in the sand, Or trunks in cement, Here it is I stand, It is what is meant*”. Interessement is complete, the actors in the network are convinced that the auto/ethnographer holds the answer to the problem defined in the problematization stage and the competing network has been effectively destabilized. The next stage of enrolment of the actors can begin.

## **Enrolment**

### *submission to the defined roles*

During the enrolment stage the actors choose to submit or accept the roles which have been defined during the interessement stage. The actors submit or accept their own role within the network and in turn, break their ties with competing networks (Callon, 1986). The actors who had defined the roles will seek to build alliances between the actors they have defined (Clegg, 1989; Callon & Latour, 1981; Callon, 1998; Law, 1986) and then mobilize those alliances to achieve the objectives for which they were established.

Once I had made the decision to change my methodology, engaged with other actors in the DBA network, the roles performed by me and those involved in my project had been defined (Callon, 1986; Callon, 1998). As the actors began to perform according to those roles a shift took place in my writing, my behavior and my selves. The auto/ethnographic self had succeeded in establishing a new network and had convinced the actors involved to accept the roles defined within it. In response to this, the case study research self no longer performed during the writing of the thesis. This self did, however, continue to actively speak out through poetry as is shown in the following poem titled Alone; written on 31-1-2013 after receiving feedback on my original first draft of the thesis.

**Table 11 - Analysis Poem Five- Alone**

<i>Alone in the dark Alone in the night Screaming to on one Announcing my plight</i>	I am alone, there is nobody else here.	The other actors have left. The self is alone. It can no longer exert agency.
<i>Neither here nor there There is nobody anywhere Ever I am afraid Ever I have gone</i>	I am alone, there is nobody else here and I am afraid.	There are no other actors within the network to which the self once subscribed.
<i>Alone in the night Alone with my fright So it's always been I shall not change the end</i>	I accept that I am alone, I will not fight it. This is what is meant, I accept.	The self has accepted its disenfranchised role. It is no longer the role which can exert agency. It submits to the role defined for it by the 'new' self.

Though the poem was chronologically produced before the meeting described in the interessement section took place, it is evidence that the shift in the network had already taken place. The role who was able to exert agency over others in the network was the auto/ethnographic researcher, which was a switch from the beginning of the process when the case study researcher had performed that role.

This leads to the answer to the question, who or what is doing the speaking if not a fully formed researcher? By examining these different transitions within my work and the different voices which arose as the project changed it becomes clear that the answer is the actor who is performing the role which has been defined for her by the network at the time the speech performance takes place. The poly-vocality (Shotter, 2008) found in the text is not the result of a schizophrenic research student, rather it is the performances of the different actors engaged in the social construct of this project; composed of the DBA program and the person doing the research, me. As my project evolved and my own self-awareness grew, the social network to which I had originally subscribed no longer fit the requirements to solve the problem at hand, conducting a research project that would result in a DBA thesis. It therefore became necessary for me as the researcher to seek other methods by which to solve the problem. This change in methods triggered a change to the research

construct, which gave rise to another voice that was connected to another iteration of self. As the construct responded to the changes, through positive feedback and association, the 'new' iteration of self was deemed to be worthy by the other actors in the network and thereby exert agency (Law, 1986; Callon, 1986; Clegg, 1989; Latour, 1986; Latour, 2005a). The method by which this 'new' self created and solidified its existence and therefore identity was through its discursive performance (Callon, 1991; Latour, 1986). By talking the talk it was able to walk the walk and became known as the auto/ethnographic self. It is this self, which does the speaking in this final version of the thesis. Should I write further pieces in the future, chances are that it will be another iteration of self that does the speaking (Humphreys & Learmonth, 2011) as the construct in which the act is performed will in most likelihood be different than the one in which I now participate.

## **Mobilization**

### *the network is activated*

The final stage of the sociology of translation is the stage where the roles and alliances are crystalized and put into action (Callon, 1986; Clegg, 1989). A set of actions or methods are set into motion by the actors who have designed the network to ensure that the rest of the actors adhere to their defined roles and the conditions set by the previous stages (Clegg, 1989). This is the stage when spokespersons are selected to speak on behalf of the various roles, thus giving the network one unanimous voice (Callon, 1986).

When applying this stage to my journey through this study, it was in the final year of the DBA program that the network was mobilized. In the previous stages I dealt with the problem of having a study, method and researcher who were ill suited to work together. This gave rise to the need to change methods and methodology which led to change of supervisor and the introduction of a new actor into the network, a new research self. Once the different actors within the network had been effectively interested they also allowed the new

research self to exert agency over them and the network (Callon, 2007; Clegg, 1989; Callon & Latour, 1981; Law, 1986; Latour, 1991). The mobilization stage was reached when I began to actively work with supervisor 2 and engage with auto/ethnography. I removed large sections of text from my previous work and began the task of re-analyzing and re-writing my thesis. I explored different ways of writing and reflecting and delved further and further into the literature about performativity, auto/ethnography, organizational change and change agents. This resulted in a revision to my research aims and a major overhaul of the theoretical framework of the thesis. The dialogue between myself, DBA program peers, program management and my supervisor (2) further crystalized the alliances in the new network. This is evidence that within the network, it is the 'new' self, the auto/ethnographic self, who had been selected to perform the role of spokesperson for the network. It is this self who has written the final thesis and will perform during the viva.

The final stages of the DBA process further support the mobilization of the network. By following the formal university process of writing up, submitting and defending the thesis; the ways in which the final goal for the network can be achieved, graduation with a Dr. Title, has been defined. Once these final stages are complete, the network will have achieved the goal for which it had been established. The problem presented during the problemitization stage will have been solved.

## **Durability of the Network**

### *Will it last*

In his presentation of the sociology of translation, Callon(1986) raises the question of durability of the network created between the scientists, scallops and fishermen. "Closure occurs when the spokesmen are deemed to be beyond question"(Callon, 1986; 220). Thus, merely moving through the translation process is not a guarantee that the network created will maintain its durability. It is only when the validity of the spokespersons and the network they represent



is deemed without question by the other actors in the network that the network is truly durable.

Though I do not question the durability of the network as it currently stands; DBA program, my auto/ethnographic research self and the Aspen project, I do question its durability once the aim of the network has been achieved, graduation from the DBA program. Once that aim has been achieved, then it brings the necessity of the network into question and also signals the departure of several of the actors; namely those involved in the DBA program and the Aspen project itself. Though I may choose to write further articles and papers using the Aspen project as the basis, this will create a new problem and hence require the establishment of a new network. For me as a researcher, the task becomes maintaining and developing the auto/ethnographic self within the next set of constructs and networks as my academic career progresses. So, should I be asked whether or not the network established between myself, the DBA program and my project at Aspen is durable, I would say yes and no. Yes, because the methods and tools (Clegg, 1989; Callon, 1991; Latour, 1986) I have used to construct the identity of my auto/ethnographic research self (Ford & Harding, 2008) are reinforced by actors in different networks and in my discourse. No, because the goal for which the network was created will have been achieved, thus signaling that the stages of sociology of translation will begin again (Latour, 2005a; Callon, 1998) and a new network will be created.

Similar to the development of my different research selves, interactions between myself and my colleagues at the Aspen company during the change process [in combination with the various non-human actors contained within the socio-technical network] resulted in a new managerial version of me, my change agent self. In performing the multiple managerial tasks assigned to me, I had been split into multiple managerial selves; the Demand Manager, the Pricing Manager and as a subset of this self, the Change Agent. In the next section I will follow the actualization of this self as I moved through the stages of

translation (Callon, 1986; Latour, 1983; Latour, 2005a) when leading organizational change.

### **My Change Agent Self**

#### **My Multi-Role Performativity as an Internal Change Agent**

Following the same framework as used in the above section, I turn the the sociology of translation upon myself in the role of the Change Agent to explore my multi-role performativity when leading organizational change.

### **Problemitization**

Problemitization is the stage when an actor or actors seek to make themselves indispensable to the other actors in the network through the definition of a problem and a proposed solution to that problem (Callon, 1986; Latour, 1983; Latour, 2005a). The problem solving actors then define an 'obligatory passage point' (Akrich & Latour, 1992; Callon, 1986; Latour, 1986) a ritual, stage, process etc. as defined by the problem solving actors. It is only by passing through this point that the problem can be solved.

*A problem is identified, Inter-definition of the actors and becoming indispensable*

#### **My problem and actualization [inter-definition] as the Change Agent**

As described in Chapter 4, for me to fully actualize my role as the Pricing Manager, it was necessary to first actualize my role as a Change Agent by leading the changes to the Pricing Policy and Processes needed to implement the IT System. At the time I was not aware that this was a problem or that I or the other actors within the network were actively engaged in the creation of this new role or, as I call it, version of self. Rather, it was through our movements that we [I, my peers and the network] solved the problem of creating a Change Agent self.

For me the problem was the need to define my role as the Change Agent and separate it from the other roles which I already performed within the company. The definition of a separate role would allow me to perform different activities related to each role and keep the different selves organized as I shifted between roles. This multiplicity provided the freedom to perform tasks associated with the Change Agent that would not have been possible for the other roles. An example of this was the method I used to make changes to the Pricing Policy. Following the methodology prescribed by the IT system, I defined the problem, proposed a solution and then presented the solution without asking for input from other actors. By communicating that Pricing Policy needed to be changed to comply with the IT system I defined the problem and then proposed the solution, change the policy; thus positioning me [in the role of Change Agent] as indispensable to the network (Callon & Latour, 1981; Callon, 1986; Latour, 1983; Latour, 1991; Latour, 2005a). I had defined my role as the Change Agent as one with the authority to change policy to comply with the IT system requirements. Said another way, I had defined my role as the Change Agent as one which; in order to comply with the IT system requirements, would change company policy. The Change Agent was an agent of the IT system as opposed to an agent of the company.

#### My colleagues' problem and actualization [inter-definition] of the Change Agent

The problem presented to my colleagues was not the need to create new roles or versions of self, rather it was the requirement to find an outlet for emotions or responses to the IT system and the change process. For my boss, this was the need to find someone to lead the project, which he achieved by defining my role in the Project Charter. This availed him of his not needing to do the 'dirty work' but still having an influence. For my colleagues, this was achieved through the way in which they responded to me as I worked to actualize my Change Agent role. When I presented my problem and solution of changing the Pricing Policy to meet system requirements, there was little to no response from the organization about its feasibility or appropriateness. Rather, a mute acceptance

of the change occurred, thus accepting my role as the Change Agent acting on behalf of the system.

#### Establishment of an obligatory passage point

Through the act of changing the Pricing Policy to comply with the IT system requirements, I had simultaneously identified my role as the Change Agent and identified that role as an obligatory passage point. I had effectively communicated to the organization the following, 'You have a problem; the current pricing policy does not work with the IT system. However, by working with me, I can solve that problem because I [in my role as the Change Agent] have the authority to change company policy to meet the IT system requirements. Go through me and your problem will be solved because I can act on behalf of the system' (Callon & Latour, 1981; Callon, 1986; Latour, 1983; Latour, 1986; Latour, 2005a).

This position was further strengthened by the way I used objects associated with the IT system and my role as the Change Agent. I contained all communications about the project within my office, effectively turning it into a black box (Callon, 1991; Brown & Middleton, 2005) wherein all activities related to the project were contained. With the exception of technical conference calls, my actions related to the project were conducted behind the closed door of my office space. The project timeline was posted on my walls, the project plan was updated and stored in a file on my shared drive, changes to company policy were typed up on my computer, the user manual was written and initial testing was all done within the privacy of my office. Similar to the Demand Management tasks I performed, while all of my steps were documented; only I and my boss had access to the documentation. In closing myself and my activities off from the organization, I was further defining the role of the Change Agent as one who was not an active member of the organization. Rather, the Agent was allied with and performed on behalf of other actors. However, it was that alliance, the Change Agent and the IT system, which had defined the

problem, solution and the obligatory passage point. In defining my role as the Change Agent I had allied myself with a non-human system, the IT system (Callon, 1986; Latour, 2005a; Law, 1986) and began to perform on its behalf, thus beginning the process of dehumanizing me in the role as the Change Agent. However, this actualization was not yet complete, as the alliances proposed in this first stage had not yet been locked into place. This brings me to the next stage of translation, *interessement*.

## **Interessement**

### *locking allies into place*

During *interessement* a series of methods are used to lock the allies into place (Callon, 1986). Any competing networks are identified and destabilized through the same methods which are used to solidify and strengthen the alliances proposed during *interessement* (Callon, 1986; Clegg, 1989). The methods of *interessement* are unlimited (Callon, 1986) but the overriding goal remains the same, encouraging or seducing the actors identified during problematization to form the alliances proposed. This requires an interruption to be created between any other existing networks, known as competing networks. Once I had defined my role as the Change Agent to myself and my colleagues, competing networks needed to be destabilized and the new ties reinforced. The *interessement* methods used by the Change Agent self were (i) learning how to work with the IT system in the role as the system administrator and (ii) communicating the intended benefits of the tool to the commercial organization.

Before I could interest my colleagues, I first needed to go through the process of *interessement* in my own role as the Change Agent. Though I had begun the process of building an alliance with the IT system in the problematization stage, it was in this second stage that I, in the role of the Change Agent, dismissed the possibility of other alliances. This was achieved by going through my own user training program led by the IT project lead based in the USA. Using a series of conference calls and online programs, he taught me how to use and manage

the system in the role of IT system administrator. I was able to set up users, assign pricing authorities and turn the Pricing Policy from a document into a set of rules within the IT system. Once I had undergone this training process, I was further convinced of the tool's ability to solve the problems surrounding the pricing processes and procedures. As the Change Agent I believed the system was the one and only solution and I, as its implementer and administrator, was responsible for implementing it to solve those problems (Callon & Latour, 1981; Callon, 1986; Latour, 1983; Latour, 1991; Latour, 2005a; Law, 1991). To me, spreadsheets, e-mails and other methods that had been previously used to manage pricing were inferior to the IT system and I engaged in a communication campaign to discredit those methods so as to make the IT implementation [my IT implementation] a success. This leads me to the second interestment method used, the communication program, which was deployed to convince my colleagues of the merits of the IT system.

Once my Change Agent role had crystalized her alliance with the IT system, it was time to destabilize the competing pricing management methods that were still used by my colleagues. The Change Agent used a communication program focusing on the benefits of using the IT system; ease of making mass price adjustments, automation of the approval process, more visibility and traceability of pricing changes for management and so on. I focused on how much time would be saved, how much more accurate the system was than the spreadsheets, and how automation would replace the existing manual systems. I was simultaneously heralding the benefits of my solution and discrediting the existing methods as archaic, inaccurate and time consuming (Callon, 1991; Law, 1991; Latour, 1991; Latour, 1983). When no active counter-movement was made against the claims made, this indicated that the Change Agent role had been accepted by my colleagues. As the Change Agent, I had convinced them of the merits of the system, further crystalizing the alliance created. However, their alliance with the system and I had not yet been fully actualized, meaning that my Change Agent role was also not fully actualized. It is in the next stage of translation that the system members submit to their defined roles.

## **Enrolment**

### *submission to the defined roles*

During the enrolment stage the actors choose to submit or accept the roles which have been defined during the interessement stage. The actors submit or accept their own role within the network and in turn, break their ties with competing networks (Callon, 1986). The actors who had defined the roles will seek to build alliances between the actors they have defined (Clegg, 1989; Callon & Latour, 1981; Callon, 1998; Law, 1986) and then mobilize those alliances to achieve the objectives for which they were established.

I submitted to my role as the Change Agent when I undertook the task of writing the IT system user manual, giving trainings to my colleagues and setting up the system to go-live. By engaging in these tasks I further mobilized my alliance with the IT system to achieve the goal of implementing the system to solve the pricing management issues. At this stage I was not just espousing the merits of the system; I was actively engaging with it and speaking for it. I had programmed the tool and was teaching users how to use it so that they too could solve the problem of pricing management using my solution. My message [as the Change Agent] was 'if you want to solve your problem of pricing management, use my user guide to help you engage with my ally the IT system; work with us and we will solve your problem' (Callon, 1986; Callon & Latour, 1981; Latour, 1983; Latour, 2005a).

A distinguishing feature of this role, which differentiated it from my other existing role as the Demand Manager was the set of criteria used to measure success. As the Demand Manager my role was to facilitate the development of the monthly forecast by collaborating with my colleagues in the commercial organization. Their inputs were critical to my success and therefore, the processes used were open and transparent. Conversely, in the role as Change Agent, I was tasked with implementing an IT system which did not require collaboration with my colleagues. The success of the IT implementation was

defined by adhering to the project timeline and insuring that the pricing policy had been properly executed through system automation. I did not need to collaborate with my colleagues to make the IT system a success; I needed to collaborate with the IT system itself. If it went live on time and with the correct information, my role as the Change Agent was also successful. This resulted in me physically shutting myself off from my colleagues when I was working on the IT implementation by closing the door to my office. I did not want them interfering in or interrupting my activities when I was writing user manuals, discussing the system with the US offices or performing various tests. This act further defined my role as the Change Agent as one which was closed, removed, shut away, and it differentiated it from the Demand Manager who was fun, collaborative and open. By performing this split I made it possible for my colleagues to respond to me differently, which gave rise to the behaviors which I found to be distressing. This dehumanization was further strengthened by the social construct as their group was engaged in the disenfranchising of the IT tool group (Callon, 1986; Law, 1986; Latour, 2005a). So long as I was the spokesperson for the IT tool, I was part of another group which was seen as a threat. When engaging with my colleagues as the Change Agent I had ceased to exist as Nicole the person, the demand manager and the lunch partner. Though, it is not until the stage of mobilization that the consequence of this behavior becomes evident.

## **Mobilization**

*the network is activated*

Mobilization is the stage where a set of actions or methods are set into motion by the actors who have designed the network to ensure that the rest of the actors adhere to their defined roles and the conditions set by the previous stages (Clegg, 1989). This is the stage when spokespersons are selected to speak on behalf of the various roles, thus giving the network one unanimous voice (Callon, 1986).



The mobilization actions were deployed by the Change Agent to ensure that all actors within the network adhered to their roles and took place during the IT system go-live stage. As I have described in Chapter 4, resistance to the IT tool was encountered shortly before the go-live date in the form of an e-mail. The resistance was overruled by my boss, using an e-mail written by me as the Change Agent, and the IT system went live on target. This combination of movements completed the actualization of the Change Agent role; both for me and for my colleagues.

The Change Agent role was fully actualized when my boss asked me to write up the rebuttal to the arguments presented by the Product Managers against the IT system and its methodology. I [the Change Agent] was selected to speak on behalf of the system, thus acting as its spokesperson and giving our alliance one unanimous voice (Callon, 1998; Callon, 1986; Callon, 1991). Furthermore, by forcing the implementation through in the face of resistance, my boss had also validated the work done by me as the Change Agent in establishing the roles of the actors at earlier stages (Clegg, 1989; Law, 1991; Latour, 1986; Latour, 1991). When the system went live on time using the correct methodology, the requirements for success as the Change Agent had been met and the role fully actualized. I further reinforced this role with my weekly Tips and Tricks e-mails, performing the system administrator role and acting as the system help desk. The Change Agent was the eyes, ears and voice of the IT system. This role was able to exert agency by forcing the users to adhere to its parameters for success and the tools it used (Callon & Latour, 1981; Latour, 1991; Latour, 1986; Law, 1986).

However, in trying to improve my own situation I also became the constructor of my own misery. I continued to use objects (Callon, 1986; Brown & Middleton, 2005; Clegg, 1989; Latour, 2005a; Callon & Law, 1988; Law, 1986; Akrich & Latour, 1992; Callon & Latour, 1981; Latour, 1986) to strengthen my position as the IT system spokesperson, thus strengthening my own ties with the non-human entity and further dehumanizing myself. An example of this was the

development of the IT system user guide, which I wrote and distributed during the training sessions. Whenever a user would call with a problem, I would advise him or her to get out their user guide and we would walk through it together to solve the problem. Another object used was the system itself, which I used to enforce the rules and procedures established in the Pricing Policy (Beckkers, 1998; Bellamy, 1998). As the system administrator I had the ability to exert agency (Callon, 1986; Clegg, 1989; Law, 1986) over the system users by granting them various levels of access to data (Bellamy, 1998; Beckkers, 1998) and the authority (Clegg, 1989) to offer or approve pricing.

The consequence of success for the Change Agent was the distinct separation of this role in relation to that of the Demand Manager. To achieve success as the Change Agent it was necessary for me to remove myself from the associations linked to the Demand Manager; open, collaborative, fun, social. I had to adopt an identity which was linked to a system and a process; one which was highly rational and objective, requiring little to no collaboration with my colleagues. To my colleagues, as the Change Agent I had become a lifeless system which represented something they did not like or trust. Therefore, in assuming my role as the Change Agent as prescribed in the project charter, performing that role during and speaking with the voice of that role had begun the process of dehumanizing myself as the Change Agent. The social network reinforced this objectification by accepting and responding to me when I performed this role as the human manifestation of a system, a zombie or a robot as opposed to a person. The combination of the requirements for success in the Change Agent role, my performance of that role and the response of the social network to that role resulted in the Change Agent being an object rather than a subject. This meant that my colleagues could respond to the Change Agent differently from when they responded to my other roles, devoid of guilt or conscience as this role/self was different from the others. This is illustrated in the e-mail incident described in Chapter 4, wherein the system is attacked but I am not included. To my colleagues, the Change Agent role was not related to a person, it was connected to the system and only to the system. This made it possible for them to respond to me in this role as an object, non-human, non-

feeling because for them, I was not a part of that role. My body was merely the shell in which that role performed but the person who they invited to lunch belonged to the Demand Manager role.

### **Durability of the Network**

#### *Will it last*

Simply moving through the translation process is not a guarantee that the network created will maintain its durability. It is only when the validity of the spokespersons and the network they represent is deemed without question by the other actors in the network that the network is truly durable (Callon, 1986; Callon, 1991; Latour, 1991).

In this situation, the network to which I belonged in the Change Agent role is not durable. Once the IT system had gone live and the goals of the change program had been met, the Change Agent role was no longer necessary. Though I had fully actualized the role as a subset of my Pricing Manager role, the requirements for success in that role included other elements. Therefore, my Change Agent self was no longer needed and I was expected to shed this identity. However, though this role retreated to the shadows and its place filled by the System Administrator role, it did not disappear. It became an artefact within the Pricing Manager/ System Administrator role and bore the scars of its experience. In other words, my objectified self was interwoven into the fabric of my subject self. The Pricing Manager would not have come into existence without the Change Agent, so she could not be rid of her. As the objectified self 'disappeared' from the sight of the organization, it forgot her existence and responded to the subject self as if the object self never existed. This created confusion for me [the subject] as I [she] did not understand the differentiation. My experience of feeling like a pariah in a hostile environment was not forgotten and I could not understand why my colleagues were responding to me as though nothing had happened. My experiences in the role of the Change Agent had damaged my ability to trust my colleagues and want to interact with them. I

continued to disconnect myself from the network by declining lunch invitations, closing my door more frequently and engaging less in chatter by the coffee machine. The experience of being objectified had damaged me and I felt unable to be re-humanized. This resulted in me choosing to leave the company, thus cutting myself out of the network and rendering the network to which I belonged [me, the IT system, my boss and the Pricing Policy] not durable. However, though I was not longer acting within the network, the network created between the IT system, Pricing Policy and my colleagues did remain durable.

As described in Chapter 4, when I returned in the role of the external researcher, the system was being used and its benefits were being espoused by the organizational members. This stage, defined as mobilization, allowed me to look at the network from a different perspective and interact with my former peers in a different role. In assuming the researcher role, I experienced a different reaction from my colleagues than what I had experienced as the project owner or system administrator. By no longer performing as the IT system spokesperson I had broken my ties with the network as I was no longer viewed as an object. It was this transition that allowed for me to engage with the research in a different way and for my former colleagues to express their feelings about the IT system in a different way. However, I still felt uncomfortable when being at the company. As I have described in Chapter 4, I chose not to sit in my old office to conduct interviews. That space still contained artefacts of my previous selves [the Demand and Pricing Managers] one which was a subject and one which was an object. Though for my colleagues the objectified self no longer existed, she was a part of my subject self, making it impossible for me to split the two. My inability to split the object from the subject made it impossible for me to enter the space without resurrecting the specters of the objectified self that existed within me. In other words, my multi-role performances resulted in the creation of multiple versions of self and though to the network, they were two distinctly different selves; to me they were connected and interdependent upon each other. The former could not exist without the latter, thus making it impossible for me to split the objectified

Change Agent self from the subject Demand Manager, Pricing Manager or research selves. This leads me to ask the following questions, is it possible for the change agent to be re-humanized after leading the change process? Can she be re-integrated into the network or, because the network to which she previously belonged no longer exists, is she left out in the liminal space neither here nor there. And once she has been re-humanized, what happens to the trauma she experienced while leading the change? These are the questions I will answer in the last and final chapter of this thesis, Conclusions, where I will present my theory on how Change Agents are affected by leading organizational change and the implications for management.

### **Chapter Summary**

In this chapter I explored multiple versions of (my)self that performed the various roles examined in the study to answer the question; *How is the change agent affected by the experience of leading change?* Following my auto/ethnographic methodology using the combined methods of evocative interpretivism through the writing of emotional accounts (Doloriet and Sambrook, 2012); and analytic realism supported by an analytical framework (Anderson, 2006), I combined the use of reflective texts with the application of a combined approach to performativity in accordance with actor-network theory. Using texts produced during different stages of the study I showed how and when different selves emerged and examined how those selves engaged with one another following the sociology of translation and discursive analysis. The use of these texts introduced a new role into the study; my auto/ethnographic research self. I then turn the sociology of translation upon myself in the role of the Change Agent to explore how the role was actualized by the movements of actors in the network. This leads to a discussion about the objectification of the Change Agent and the consequences of one role being objectified when engaged in multi-role performativity. The chapter is concluded by questioning whether or not the objectified Change Agent can be effectively re-humanized, which will be answered in the next chapter, Conclusions.

## Chapter 6 Conclusions

*After 6 years of ups, downs, dead ends and new beginnings I can hardly believe that I'm writing the conclusion to this thesis. Two years ago I thought I might never finish and that this project would defeat me as I struggled to find my way and come to terms with the new research self that was developing. Now, here we are, at the end of one journey, which is actually just the start to another. As I prepare to leave the social construct of the DBA program, I am already busy participating in others; who knows where that may lead. (Reflective Journal, 2014)*

### Introduction

This chapter gives the answers to the questions presented at the end of the discussion chapter as a preamble to the answer to the main research question and aim of the study: *Explain how the change agent is affected by the experience of leading change*. The contributions to theory, implications for management and limitations of the study are then presented followed by the chapter summary.

### The Effects of Leading Change on the Change Agent

In the previous chapter, Discussion, I concluded by presenting the following questions: Is it possible for the change agent to be re-humanized after leading the change process? Can she be re-integrated into the network or, because the network to which she previously belonged no longer exists, is she left out in the liminal space neither here nor there? And once she has been re-humanized, what happens to the trauma she experienced while leading the change? In this section I will answer these questions and present my theory of how leading change affects the change agent.

When tasked with leading organizational change, the manager actor [performing as a member of the network in-situ] is challenged with disrupting the network to move it through the stages of translation and create a new network. This requires her to actualize a new role, that of the change agent, which is a member neither of the in-situ network nor the network to be. This role is one which exists purely for the purpose of disruption and movement, thus making it one which forms alliances with the actors who represent these concepts to the other actors. The actualization of this role results in the development of a new version of self, the change agent self, which is often in tandem with the existing managerial self. As this new version of self performs, she is separate from the in-situ network for she was not an initial member of this network. Because she [the change agent self] is a subset of the manager actor, this creates problems for the manager actor as her duality of acting as both the change agent and manager blurs the lines between which self is performing, leading to a loss of identity for the manager actor. Is she the manager, the change agent or both? Through her performances as the change agent self, the manager actor engages in the circular reinforcement of the role of the change agent, wherein her actions meet the expectations of the network, the network responds to her performances and she responds to the network. Because the change agent is neither a member of the in-situ nor the future network, this self becomes objectified by the network; it is a part of the rational, objective change process. However, because this self is performing in tandem with the subject managerial self [also contained within the human form of the manager actor] the manager actor becomes confused about her subjectivity. She begins to question whether or not she is a person or an object, or both; which makes one or both of these selves potentially disposable. The manager actor is both an object [acting as the change agent] and a subject [acting as the manager], caught between two networks and two versions of self.

Once the translation process has been completed and the change implemented, the change agent self is no longer required; the 'objectified self' is disposed of by the organization, leaving the managerial self. Though this self was necessary to disrupt and build networks, she belonged to neither and is

therefore also disposable. However, because she is contained within the manager actor, she does not disappear. Rather, the change agent self becomes an artefact of the change process, contained within the network of the manager actor. This creates a challenge for the manager self as she did not understand the objectification and once the object is gone, the subject is lost. Although to the network she was an object when performing as the change agent, within the shell there was always a person, a subject, the managerial self. Thus, the subject [managerial self] and therefore the manager actor is damaged by the change process and, depending on the severity of the trauma, the only coping mechanism that may be available for the manager actor is to leave the network. In other words, the objectified change agent cannot be effectively re-humanized as she remains connected to the objectified self, and therefore for herself, remains partially in-human; so long as she remains a member of the network. When she cuts the network, she cuts the ties to the objectified self and is able to re-humanize by joining a new network. This leads to the questions: Is it possible for the change agent to be re-humanized after leading the change process? Can she be re-integrated into the network or, because the network to which she previously belonged no longer exists, is she left out in the liminal space neither here nor there? To all of these the answer is no. The change agent is unable to be re-humanized because this self never was humanized to begin with. The identity of the change agent was created by the movements between the agent, the change process and the actor-network, and in those moves her identity as an object was actualized. Therefore, though she is a sub-set of the human managerial self, she was merely an object contained within a human form. However, because her identity is interdependent on the existence of the managerial self, this creates the tension between the human and the object. For the actor within whom both selves are contained, it is impossible to split the two apart. This juxtaposition between the two versions of self and the inability of the humanized managerial self to cope with the objectification of her Siamese twin, the change agent self, results in the emotional pain and trauma she experiences. Thus, the answer to the third question [Once she has been re-humanized, what happens to the trauma she experienced while leading the change?] is that that trauma doesn't exist for the



change agent but it does exist for the managerial self. She carries the scars of the trauma incurred and seeks for ways to cope.

### **Contribution to Theory**

Actor-network theory breaks down the barrier between the human and non-human actor and has been criticized that by doing so [making the human and non-human equal] the human actor is objectified or de-humanized. By reducing the human actor to one which is equal to all others in the network the emotional impact of the translation process on the human actor is largely ignored in the existing ANT literature. ANT is traditionally used in an ethnographic form for socio-technical accounts to show how a technical system has engaged with a social network, stimulating change (Brown & Middleton, 2005; Callon, 1986; Callon & Law, 1988; Hussenot, 2008; Latour, 2005a; Law, 1986; Tatnall & Burgess, 2002). However, none of these studies addresses the effects on the human actor as her identity is actualized through the translation process. By applying the sociology of translation to my own evolution from positivistic case study researcher to a post-modern social constructionist auto/ethnographer and an agent of change, I demonstrate another use for ANT as tool for the exploration of self. This combination creates a method by which the human actor can examine him or herself as an object of study while also being able to examine the self in relation to the system in which she participates (Doloriert & Sambrook, 2009; Haynes, 2011; Mischenko, 2005; Ronai, 1998; Orr & Bennett, 2012). The human actor is able to examine her/himself as she/he is transformed during and by the process she leads, allowing for a deeper exploration and understanding of the self or selves as they are being actualized during the transformation process. This results in a deeper level of self-knowledge and awareness of the concepts of self and identity for the human actor; both of which are challenged during the translation process. It is only when the human actor is truly aware of her/his own roles and internal processes that she/he is able to utilize reflexivity when leading change. Therefore, by combining actor-network theory with auto/ethnography, I have provided a means by which the human actor can gain deeper understating into her/his own internal processes. She/he must first identify which self is performing in order to

effectively reflect upon the performance of that self. ANT provides the framework to do so and when combined with auto/ethnography, re-humanizes the actor so that she can examine both the emotional and objective aspects of self.

Within the body of knowledge surrounding the role of the internal change agent in facilitating and catalyzing organizational change, it has been identified that there is a need for further research into change agents themselves. The current change agent literature does not address the multiplicity of selves created during the change process nor address the emotional trauma experienced by agents as they are moved in and out of networks. By tracing my own experience of becoming an internal change agent I provide further insight into the how the internal change agent is affected by her/his experience of leading change. I show the depth to which the agent is affected by her/his experience of leading change and the emotional trauma she/he incurs from being objectified during the change process. I demonstrate the need for management to provide sufficient support and care for their change agents and the necessity for the agent her/himself to engage in a deeper level of self- awareness that extends beyond the boundaries of reflexivity. When leading the change process, the agent is tasked with 'becoming' the change she/he is leading, therefore creating the conditions for becoming objectified and losing her humanity. However, because the change agent is one self or role which performs in tandem with other selves inside of the social network, it is not possible for the agent to actually be an object as she/he is attached to the other human roles she concurrently performs. This means that even if the change agent is actualized as an object by both the social system and possibly even her/his own other selves, due to the interdependent nature of that role upon her other human roles, she/he cannot detach herself from the emotions felt by her human counterparts. It is in this relationship wherein the emotional pain and trauma felt by the change agent lies as she/he is caught between being both an object and a human. In this situation it is then not enough to be reflexive as the change agent must first be able to recognize her/his multiple versions of self and develop an awareness of her/his own internal processes before she/he can

begin to identify how they are performing and the consequences of those performances. If she/he is unable or incapable of doing so, then the use of reflexivity is not sufficient as it cannot be applied to the appropriate version of self.

Therefore the theoretical contribution of this thesis is as follows. The role of the change agent is one which is attached to rational goals and objectives. When the change agent assumes that role, she/he then assumes an identity which is rational or non-human. In other words, the change agent becomes the rational goals and objectives she/he is tasked with implementing. Therefore in that role she/he is a non-human, she/he too becomes an object. In being objectified the change agent is stripped of her/his humanity and must attempt to balance her/his human self in the role as a manager with the non-human role as the change agent she/he is tasked with performing. This dual existence creates a challenge because the two selves are not mutually exclusive of each other; they co-exist within the same human vessel and in the same organization. They are forced to co-exist while belonging to two different social constructs contained within the larger organizational framework. The result of this awkward co-existence is the managerial self becoming confused when organizational members respond to the change agent self in a different way as she cannot split the two selves. She/he is juxtaposed as both a human and a non-human; she/he is both a subject and an object. This is what causes the damage as she/he is unable to split the two roles, the two selves, the two identities. When the organizational change is complete the organization disposes of the change agent role, but the artefact of the role continues to exist within the human subject manager. She/he cannot dispose of the change agent role and cannot undo the act of being objectified and therefore carries the damage with her as she/he moves forward into new roles.

### **Implications for Management and Future Research**

This thesis provides an in depth account of the experience of a real manager when leading planned organizational change as an internal change agent. It illustrates the effects on the individual (Eriksen, 2008) and their relationship with

peers (Hartley, et al., 1997) as they embody the change (Eriksen, 2008) they implement. These effects are extremely painful: the change agent is reduced to the status of an object, albeit one that suffers very badly from the emotions it experiences as a result of being turned into an object. This reinforces the need of internal support (Pettigrew, 2003) for change agents as they juggle the multiple roles they have been asked to perform. Furthermore, this thesis challenges the concept that the practice of self-reflection (Eriksen, 2008; Pettigrew, 2003; Schon, 1983) when leading change is sufficient to cope with the consequences of role multiplicity it produces for the change agent. In this account I have shown that reflexivity alone does not provide enough insight for the manager actor when she/he is in the process of co-actualizing new identities within the actor-network that she/he is tasked with changing in her role as the change agent. Because the network and the actor are co-dependent upon one another, this makes it difficult for the agent to identify where she/he begins and the network ends; resulting in a lack of awareness of her/his own internal processes while the change agent identity is created and actualized. Furthermore, in the scenario when the change agent self is a subset of an existing manager actor, this complicates the situation as the question becomes, who is performing the reflection: the change agent, the manager actor or another version of self that exists within the actor-network. When the change agent has been objectified by the actualization process, resulting from the movements between her and the network, then she is an object, which is not supposed to be able to feel or reflect; which again raises the issue of who [or which version of self] is engaging in reflexivity. These are issues to be explored in future research.

When companies ask their managers to initiate change programs, they need to consider the consequences that process will have on those individuals. Leading a process which is designed to disrupt the existing system positions the change agent as bearer of the brunt of the organization's discomfort, dislike or resistance to the change program. As the change agent, the manager is objectified and therefore loses her humanity. The agent is damaged by the experience of leading the change and requires support to cope with this trauma.

How should organizations deal with this? If the change agent role is disposable insofar that the change agent is an object, then what happens to the subject that is contained within [during and after the change process]? Is that subject also disposable to the organization? These are the questions management needs to ask when assigning internal company members to lead organizational change initiatives. When embarking on change programs and assigning managers to the role of change agents management needs to ask the following questions; Is the goal of the change initiative worth the sacrifice of the subject? What will we do to support the objectified agents after the fact? How do we care for them as subjects and support their reintegration into the firm? These are also questions that can be addressed with further research.

When an organizational member is asked/tasked with assuming the role of the change agent she/he is asked to step out of and disrupt the social system in situ. In doing so she/he is pushed into a liminal space wherein she belongs to neither the in situ network nor the new network in creation. This means that she/he is pushed out of the network and is left out in no man's land after the change process has been completed. Furthermore, by being assigned to a role which is assigned to rational goals and objectives, she/he is de-humanized as she must become the change which she/he chooses to lead; she/he becomes a thing and in doing so is objectified. For organizations this means they must confront themselves with the knowledge that they are asking a human to assume the role of an object when leading organizational change. They need to look for ways in which they can support the individuals performing in these roles and raise the awareness about the consequences this role holds.

Furthermore, for management this implies that they must also create ways in which to care for their change agents, provide support systems or recognize that the outcome of leading the change can result in the change agent leaving the firm after the change is complete. Management must contemplate whether or not they wish to use internal company members to lead change or if it is wiser to utilize external consultants who begin and end the change process as

non-participating members of the social network in situ. Though there is a financial cost associated with this approach, it may be preferred over objectifying a member of the network. This also tells us as change agents that we need to be aware ourselves of what happens to us when we lead organizational change. Such awareness allows the change agent the opportunity to make an informed choice about whether or not she wishes to subject herself to the objectification process as well as devising coping strategies to help her deal with the consequences of that experience.

### **Limitations of the Study**

Due to its auto/ethnographic nature the limitations of the study lie in its being the personal account of one person's experience. It could be asked if there is something about me which makes me more susceptible to the phenomenon and/or emotions which are examined in the study. While this is a valid question, I believe that the use of actor-network theory in combination with auto/ethnography provides an accurate explanation of what happens when a manager is asked to assume the role of the change agent within her own firm. The use of a theoretical frame to analyze my own experiences provided the necessary framework to deal with the challenges of the auto/reveal and avoids emotional broadsiding (Doloriert & Sambrook, 2009). Furthermore, without first-hand accounts of change agents, it is difficult to explain what happens to the agent themselves, in their own experiences and in their own words. This study adds to the small number of auto/ethnographic texts produced by internal change agents to address this particular gap (Pettigrew, 2003; Eriksen, 2008).

### **Chapter Summary**

The purpose of this thesis was *to explain how the change agent is affected by the experience of leading change*. To this aim I traced my own experience of performing as an internal change agent using auto/ethnography within the theoretical frame of actor-network theory. In doing so I was able to make the social visible and trace the movements of the actors within the network as we progressed through planned organizational change. By examining my own

roles during the change, it was made clear that my different performances elicited different responses from my peers. Using the concept of performativity coupled with poetic texts produced while conducting this study I explored my own evolution from case study to auto/ethnographic researcher, a deeper examination of the effects of multi-role performativity on the change agent. The outcomes of the study contribute to the body of knowledge surrounding internal change agent and the use of auto/ethnography in combination with actor-network theory. For managers this study shows the depth to which acting as a change agent affects the manager and raises further questions about how change agents can be best supported. Further opportunities for research lie in examining different methods of support for change agents and the use of auto/ethnography as a method to examine the emotional effects on human actors as they move through the states of translation within the actor-network.

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## **Appendix 1- Individual Consent Form Example**

### **Maple Beech Case Individual Consent Form**

This consent form outlines my rights as a participant in the doctoral research conducted by Nicole J. Osentoski in Maple Beech B.V. Nicole is a candidate of the Doctorate of Business Administration; TiasNimbas Business School/ Tilburg and Bradford Universities. The outcomes of the study will be reported in a final Doctoral Thesis.



The purpose of the research is to collect data to identify the impact of the IT implementation on the organization. During the course of the study I may be asked to participate in organizational surveys and in-depth interviews. Interviews may last 30-90 minutes and will be audio recorded.

It is possible that communications between me and the researcher with specific regard to the IT project may also be used. These communications may include inter-company e-mails, meeting notes/agendas and project reports.

I understand that

1. Taking part in this study is entirely voluntary.
2. It is my right to decline to answer any question that I am asked.
3. I am free to end an interview at any time.
4. I may request that interviews not be audio recorded.
5. My name and identity will remain confidential in any publications or discussions.
6. My name will not appear on any tapes or transcripts resulting from interviews.
7. My name will not appear on any company documents used in the research.
8. My name will not be collected during surveys.

**I HAVE READ THIS CONSENT FORM. I HAVE HAD A CHANCE TO ASK QUESTIONS CONCERNING ANY AREAS THAT I DID NOT UNDERSTAND.**

---

(Signature of Participant)

---

(Printed name of Participant)

---

(Date)

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You may decline to participate in this study. You may end your participation in this study at any time. Maintaining your anonymity is a priority and every practical precaution will be taken to disguise your identity. There will not be any identifying information on audiotapes or transcripts of interviews, e-mails or surveys. I will not allow anyone other than the research advisors to hear any audiotape of your voice, review the transcripts of interviews, internal communications or surveys. All materials generated from your participation (e.g., audiotapes and transcripts) will remain in my direct physical possession.

---

(Signature of Interviewer and Date)

## **Appendix 2- Company Consent Form Example**

### **Maple Beech Company Consent Form**

This form outlines the consent of Maple Beech B.V. to be used as the primary research case in the doctoral research conducted by Nicole J. Osentoski, candidate Doctorate of Business Administration; TiasNimbas Business School/ Tilburg and Bradford Universities. The outcomes of the study will be reported in a final Doctoral Thesis.

The purpose of the case study is to collect data over a period of time to identify the impact of the IT implementation on the Sales and Marketing organization. The internal organizations of Maple Beech B.V. that are included in the study, Marketing and Sales, must be informed of the research and the consent of the company.

To further protect the rights of the individuals participating in the study, personal consent must be requested of all persons within the Marketing and Sales organization. This consent applies to all data collected using various methods as described in the case study protocol.

As a representative of the company I understand that by consenting to this research I grant the following rights and access to the researcher:

9. The right to conduct organizational surveys
10. The right to conduct in-depth interviews with employees.
11. Access to all internal documents; such as but not limited to: e-mails, memos, meeting notes, project plans, and consultant reports.
12. Access to archival records; such as organization charts
13. The right to protect participant identities.
14. The right to conduct the research as an outside observer without duress to show the company in a positive or negative way.

**I HAVE READ THIS CONSENT FORM. I HAVE HAD A CHANCE TO ASK QUESTIONS CONCERNING ANY AREAS THAT I DID NOT UNDERSTAND.**

---

(Signature of Company Representative)

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(Printed name of Company Representative)

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(Date)

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Individual participants have the right to decline to participate in this study. Participants may end their participation in this study at any time. Maintaining participant anonymity is a priority and every practical precaution will be taken to disguise their identity. There will not be any identifying information on audiotapes or transcripts of interviews or surveys. I will not allow anyone other than the research advisors to hear any audiotape of voice recordings or review a transcript of interviews. All materials generated from interviews (e.g., audiotapes and transcripts) will remain in my direct physical possession. All company documents will be purged of personal names and used only in the context of academic research. Company information will only be shared with the research advisors in the context of academic research.

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(Signature of Researcher and Date)

## **Appendix 3- List of Interviews Conducted**

### **List of Interview Candidates and Dates**

Candidate	Role	Interview Dates		
		mrt-10	okt-11	feb-12
Mark	Manager Sales CEE	x		x
Helen	Product Manager Papa 1	x	x	x
Ingrid	Product Manager Alpha 1	x		x
Henry	Manager Information Services	x		
Harry	Director Finance and IS		x	x
Henrietta	Product Manager Charlie 1	x		
Tim	Product Manager Charlie 2		x	
	Product Manager Papa 2/Inside			
Cindy	Sales 2			x
David	Sales Rep Alpha			x
Alex	Sales Rep Charlie			x
	Customer Services Rep/ ESP System			
Kate	Owner		x	x
Nina	Manager Marcom			x
Manuel	Manager CS			x
Jimmy	Inside Sales 1			x
Jeroen	Manager Inside Sales			x

## Appendix 4 – Interview Transcript Example

### Interview Transcript Example

Interviewer: Good morning, this is Nicole Osentoski conducting interviews at the Maple Beech Company. It is the 19<sup>th</sup> of October 2011, and I will now conduct the interview with participant number seven. Good morning.

Interviewee: Morning.

Interviewer: And thank you for your time, as I explained before we're going to do an open interview format, talk to me about pricing management, pricing authorities within a [Indiscernible] [0:00:29] materials and the use of the E.S.P. tool to formalize this process. As we get started, first thing I'll ask is a couple of questions to understand what functions you have in the organization and how long you've been at the company? So you can tell me what your role is and how many years of service you have?

Interviewee: Okay. My role is director of financing and information services basically IT and 10 years in service at the moment.

Interviewer: Okay, so you've been here for...

Interviewee: Quite a while.

Interviewer: Quite a while.

Interviewee: I mean lots of history.

Interviewer: Okay. So why don't we start with the history. Based on your experience from the past before E.S.P. was implemented, how was pricing managed in the [indiscernible] [0:01:18] specifically special net pricing?

Interviewee: Okay, the pricing was managed by people more or less on the floor and through a system that everything that was documented and formulas on pricing was not so clear. So what you would have is that there would be price, the system it was not clear who was responsible to get prices or a project structure with the system and I'm not talking about the financial prospective

because it is not my responsibility you know the pricing. But of course, being responsible for the forms of the organization, ultimately it is responsibility. So that's why I came into the picture to get pricing more established to the organization. Before we had E.S.P. pricing was not so much a big issue with the aspect, and aspect [indiscernible] [0:02:21] of course theories as long as the company is doing well, it's not a big issue but when its company not doing so well, it becomes a bigger and bigger issue.

The pricing was managed by commercial group and they have their way of doing things and there was no big issue until we had auditors coming in. And when the audits came in and did some checks and balances on how we did pricing and that there will be gaps then I was involved, that was about five to six years ago. Also that period we had discussion with the commercial group that things need to be more formalized and authorized and documented and that did not happen. It wasn't found in our management letter so it is something you don't want to happen to as a company it is alright to say hey this is [Inaudible] [0:03:21] a letter so this, when my involvement became more and more pre-dominant or dominant, I can say that.

We tried to set our structures and we have been working on structures but they were invented and sold off but never implemented and the commercial group did not want to implement it because well commercial people want to be as free as possible and of course, if you put in structures that's not what they like. But in the end I really had an issue and then one of the reasons why I thought hey what can we do to improve this and seems to have the E.S.P. system in US, I forced the organization to have ESP implemented. And that's why my role became more dominant in establishing and getting E.S.P. in us.

Interviewer: Okay.

Interviewee: That's the long story.

Interviewer: That's a good story, well put in. When you talk about pricing authorities, say you just mentioned that there was some approvals or

authorities, how are those authority levels defined or documented in the organization?

Interviewee: The documentation and getting things in the system, there was nothing formal in a system. That was in...while in the system was in a technical system but in a more mentality kind of system or shouldn't have been on paper or [Indiscernible], but there was nothing that would be forced from a IT point of view or whatever. So basically, we have a system which was described in procedures and processes but it was [paper diver] [0:05:21] and nobody really enforced it. It would work there but it was complex so there was also a big hurdle to really look at it and work with it and it really also depends by the business input. If you are going to get clinical business you want measurable structure and also much more accommodation by project management but if you wanted to press the analytical business, it was so complex and we make it ourselves complex and especially if you go to structure of [Indiscernible] [0:05:54] and have your price minus a discount it takes complicated time. If you don't get up, know price within that structure then you would to a net price. So it's a special price for one customer, so what you see is tones off net price because the structure is not working. And how was it implemented, I don't think it was more or less guarded by product management. They are the ones who did search it on paper and tried to throw up a coin for that structure.

Interviewer: Okay.

Interviewee: And if there were changes, nothing was documented or whatever, there was no authorization on those changes, it just happened.

Interviewer: Okay. And ...

Interviewee: And to be honest, for the price minus discount's that is still the case. The only way that we are or have implemented E.S.P. just take all the issue of the net pricing, which is of course over the worst prices. So that portion has been take all now and I don't know, I know it's not working perfect but at

least it's more formalized and authorized and especially the authorization was a big issues for Delloite.

Interviewer: Okay, so the authorization in that it wasn't happening, or it wasn't documented or it wasn't traceable...?

Interviewee: Yeah I mean sometimes it was documented through spreadsheets, e-mails and more documents but if you wanted to find out what's [Indiscernible] [0:07:33] actually was operates let's say one specific net price, first of all you are lucky if you could find a deck.

Interviewer: And who was responsible, for actually putting the price into the system?

Interviewee: I don't know who is responsible for it, but it happened through the customer service department, they put in this the net price in the system.

Interviewer: But they can't set the prices?

Interviewee: No, they can't set the prices, the prices were...they would get the instructions from the people in the field.

Interviewer: Okay.

Interviewee: And so basically the sales were accurate, call or mail and they would set it but there was no object from anyone on...and it is the person who's asking this if he or she allowed to give this kind of price.

Interviewer: So the price would just show up based on somebody's communication?

Interviewee: Yeah. And sometimes there of course there will be discussions with the visit managerial part of management that if a sales rep would want to do, would want to hurt a company he could do that.

Interviewer: And you mentioned you said the worst prices are the net prices. What do you define as the worst prices?

Interviewee: Where the margin or the profits for the company is the least. So basically the price will always be the lowest in the whole system. But if you have a discount and a price minus discount, the only way to get lower is through a net price. I think only in two or three percent of each cases the net price is higher than the price minus the discount that was for that customer.

Interviewer: Okay. And how many years did Deloitte tell you that this was an issue because you just said it was about five years ago you got the first management, was there...?

Interviewee: I think in, all I took three years to really force the organization.

Interviewer: Okay. What kind of resistance then if you are talking about forcing, sounds like you may have received resistance for this change?

Interviewee: Yes.

Interviewer: Yes?

Interviewee: That's true because I remember that I had sales meetings where we set up, this is the structure we want to implement and it was helped by the businesses and they would say yes but it would be a paper yes, but in reality nothing really happened. We foaled off and we invented the structures, how the things could work but it really comes to implementing it and [indiscernible] [0:10:14] all up with other things, other priorities.

Interviewer: And within the structure of pricing, who in the organization placed within the commercial group were really responsible for the pricing?

Interviewee: Yes.



Interviewer: Which department within the commercial group do you feel really has the power in owning pricing?

Interviewee: [indiscernible] [0:10:40] the business manager is ultimately responsible for setting the prices in market but we don't have business managers anymore now so and [indiscernible] [0:10:51] that is a little bit of [indiscernible] [0:10:53] who's responsible but in the end it is the commercial director who is responsible to have that set into place.

Interviewer: And in a day to day who's responsible for the most approvals on pricing?

Interviewee: If you look at it what happens now, the [indiscernible] [0:11:19] now to what level the [indiscernible] [0:11:20] can go but if he can't that then he has to go one level up. And if you look at it the [indiscernible] [0:11:29] themselves are responsible of the levels they have so they won't try to stick within those levels. So if you look at, I guess with it's a wild guess of the net price that are put in the system now, I think well 50 60 per cent will be within the authorization of the [indiscernible] [0:11:51].

Interviewer: Okay.

Interviewee: And then 30 per cent still product managers and the last 10 per cent will be at the commercial director level.

Interviewer: Okay.

Interviewee: That's my guess estimate. I haven't found out to be honest, haven't found out yet [indiscernible] [0:12:07].

Interviewer: So you told me about what it used to be like, the reasons why implementing ESP...

Interviewee: Yeah, the major reason is authorization because that is now lot and tracked in the new system that we have nothing and so if you would want to know a history about the price, there's no [indiscernible] [0:12:30] lucky if you would find something that... And the next thing is of course we have the authorizations now but you also have building barriers and also with the perpetual cost of effective prices would be higher than without the system.

Interviewer: Okay.

Interviewee: But the major reason was from an audit perspective the authorizations part.

Interviewer: And after implementing the ESP have you received the audit results you wanted, which was regards to pricing?

Interviewee: Yes because last year the auditors, the new data system of work which [indiscernible] [0:13:13] was taken out of the management letter.

Interviewer: Okay, so then you solved that issue with the auditors.

Interviewee: The technical and especially all [indiscernible] [0:13:24] are solved now.

Interviewer: Okay.

Interviewee: And the next step is also to increase profitability now, that's a bigger step.

Interviewer: Okay.

Interviewee: But from a [indiscernible] [0:13:33] point of view we have from ESP and that issue was solved now.

Interviewer: Okay. So during the ESP implementation what kind of experiences did you have at the person who issued the implementation? Did you find it to be a difficult period to implement, did you find the organization accepting up the change?

Interviewee: When we said we are going to implement there was a lot of discussion that, oh, that wasn't [indiscernible] [0:14:09] the reaction would be limited and then we wanted that's end of discussion and then the preparation, I told them that it would be forced upon them. And in the reality of implementing it, I've been on the sideline, of course I've never implemented anything myself except for well, allowing the structure and basically giving people or giving the resource and then the resources it was only [indiscernible] [0:14:41]. You had to do it.

Interviewer: Yeah.

Interviewee: And you stuck up so basically you've done all this dirty work and I could sit back and see whether you were doing well or not. That's how I moved on and I think what really was good is the whole process of how we implemented it, with more face to face trainings and helping people and not just pouring the system out over them but we've taken them by the hands off. Okay now we have to implement it, this is what's going to happen and we will help you and I think that took away a lot of the barriers and a lot of the resistance, also the psychological part comes into place. So if you look at it to be honest, you hear some people still a little bit complaining but to be honest it's a very fake [indiscernible] [0:15:35].

Interviewer: Yeah.

Interviewee: And now I think a little more and more people are also seeing that the benefit of it plus for themselves it's sometimes easy and they use just a tool to set a [indiscernible] [0:15:51]. If you look at it, in the beginning there was lot of opposition and now it has been implemented, I don't hear nothing about it,

and hearing nothing in this case is a good achievement because it means it has been accepted or they just work with it.

Interviewer: Okay.

Interviewee: Do I hear no good things but also no bad things, and so...

Interviewer: My mother always says no news is good news.

Interviewee: Something like that sounds as if a good woman [indiscernible] [0:16:25].

Interviewer: Yeah. Do you think how or who has authority in setting pricing has changed with the implementation of the ESP?

Interviewee: Yeah, because in the past involved the product management to us, let's say on pricing role was five per cent, I think it will be something like 10 or 15 per cent on pricing and also for the even bigger deals, I think there's more and more discussion now about pricing. So I think that has changed.

Interviewer: And for the...you talked about profitability and margin?

Interviewee: Yeah.

Interviewer: So what are the expectations for you as a leader in your organization from that perspective?

Interviewee: There's more uniformity in pricing and that means that if you arrange the price, it could be between zero and 100, it was between 40 and 90 and now it will be between 60 and 90, I mean the lower levels have been [indiscernible] [0:17:36] that the real bad things should have been cut out.

Interviewer: Okay.

Interviewee: There's more, you're going to do a [indiscernible] [0:17:45] matrix it's more dense now.

Interviewer: In the past you said that customer service or a group within customer service manually enter the prices into the system?

Interviewee: Yes.

Interviewer: And now who actually types the price into the system?

Interviewee: In principle no one should type in the price anymore because what you see is, it's been whoever has to enter the data and when it went through the several processes then it automatically will be fed into the system. But I know that our system [indiscernible] [0:18:26] so we authorize and that's one of the things that might be still opened up in the audits and it's still some prices have been manually entered and it should be less. But in principle there should be none.

Interviewer: Okay. Now the sales person is responsible for entering their own pricing through the ESP tool?

Interviewee: Correct.

Interviewer: Do you agree with this?

Interviewee: Yes, the formal way yes, but I know it sometimes doesn't happen like that but it should be [indiscernible] [0:18:58] in the...well in the discussions to come.

Interviewer: Okay. For you, do you feel that ESP has made it more or less difficult to manage pricing?

Interviewee: I'm looking at it from the side line of course I don't have active things on pricing but having this structure I think it should be easier for the

commercial department to establish pricing and price levels. But still we have an issue with our system it's very complex and not from a technical point of view but from a structural point of view. And it's that once a project could be tackled last year, that with the organization that has been other side and the test will be [indiscernible] [0:19:54] now.

Interviewer: Okay.

Interviewee: And that's it [indiscernible] [0:19:56].

Interviewer: This might sound like a strange question but if you had to look at the sales teams, so the outside sales organization, the product managers and the commercial director are those on the different levels within, which group do you think actually has the most informal power within the organization to implement decision making?

Interviewee: Decision making on what?

Interviewer: On the execution, on the pricing decision making and execution?

Interviewee: I think the product managers, because they should know their part of the business the best. And the reps are more, the ones who just have to execute it and the commercial guys [Indiscernible] [0:20:44] too much, to higher level. Because the product managers they should be really know what pricing is, what pricing levels and put structures so they, the backbone of the whole pricing [Indiscernible] [0:21:00] let's put it like that.

Interviewer: Okay.

Interviewee: But that's not the case at the moment to be honest.

Interviewer: Okay.

Interviewee: I don't have the feeling as if they pretence but I don't...it doesn't feel like that.

Interviewer: Okay. And for what reasons doesn't it feel like that?

Interviewee: Because if you look at it, it is as part of their job, but I don't think it's just part that they like and I think that's why it is snow down to earth.

Interviewer: Yeah.

Interviewee: Or it [Indiscernible] [0:21:36] gets the lead and less [Indiscernible] [0:21:37] then yeah that should be... It's part [Indiscernible] [0:21:43] that I think very important and it also has to do with products. The real product management but I don't think if you'll like it, some more than others but they're almost...I see them as technical people who are giving ads and getting all kind of structures into place except for us, at least it's possible. Because then it's something, there's also a call for placing the sales and then they want to be nice to you on this [Indiscernible] [0:22:12] it can be mean to the organization if they want to.

Interviewer: How can you be mean to the organization if they want to?

Interviewee: Well they have to challenge the sales reps on help if they're doing old-fashioned and I don't think that's what they like to do or what they do at the moment. I think they might have been doing sometimes get in too much.

Interviewer: Okay.

Interviewee: Saying no is difficult.

Interviewer: Okay, interesting. And do they tend to work them together, a group to make these decisions or are they responsible for a specific products?

Interviewee: They used to be responsible for product, is what they do as an organization, it's still floating and that has to be worked out yet.

Interviewer: Okay.

Interviewee: It's not clear, it's in process [Indiscernible] [0:23:00] order the construction and that's pretty about it.

Interviewer: Okay. And there's been recently an acquisition of another company in Europe?

Interviewee: Yep.

Interviewer: it has to be integrated into...are the two sides are being integrated with each other from a commercial stand point?

Interviewee: Yep

Interviewer: Do you anticipate there being changes to pricing management based on this integration or as a result of this integration?

Interviewee: No, because what's that will happen is that, if you look at it through for some price for some products we have too expensive and with that was having [Indiscernible] [0:23:36] we could adjust our price levels downward to get more volume off the market, that's the intent.

Interviewer: Okay.

Interviewee: They'll be more competitive.

Interviewer: And do you expect the pricing structure to remain the same or?



Interviewee: No, because I think, I conclude structure is too complex we should make it a little bit more simple or a little bit lot more simple also for but also for the people who buy our products.

Interviewer: And that would be customers that you mean?

Interviewee: Customers, and customers [Indiscernible] [0:24:08] and that basically is [Indiscernible] [0:24:11]

Interviewer: What is the perspective of customers on our pricing structure?

Interviewee: They don't look at our pricing structure and no clue or they have a clue of it's in a way know what their business but it's good. The whole organization of the pricing should be it's some right adapted to what their needs but it should not be soften that they should be [Indiscernible] [0:24:36] it would be interested in, know what their business and [Indiscernible] [0:24:41]

Interviewer: Yeah. And from the integration with US organization is the pricing structure you know, in [Indiscernible] [0:24:50] aligned with the US pricing structure?

Interviewee: I don't think so.

Interviewer: Okay.

Interviewee: It depends with the... I say I don't think so but from the global oriented businesses like [Indiscernible] [0:25:02], yes I think that's aligned but then there is so much in common to do regional things like diagnosis for clinical and analytical, that's a long way to go.

Interviewer: Okay.

Interviewee: If needed at all... because still especially for analytical [Indiscernible] [0:25:20] their regional market there should be some kind of

alignment especially if you got new technologies like white based [Indiscernible] [0:25:26], white based ordering if neglected then things will be visible but on the other hand the market is really...

Interviewer: Okay. And there is also an SAP implementation, moving on the horizon, do you anticipate the ESP tool to remain during the SAP implementation?

Interviewee: Yes, that's [Indiscernible] [0:25:47] will remain.

Interviewer: Okay.

Interviewee: So they will be built at first within the SAP and ESP.

Interviewer: Okay. And do you anticipate the order to be a significant impact on the organization through the use of SAP?

Interviewee: Dramatic. Yeah absolutely because every [Indiscernible] [0:26:07] region has it's own system with its own daily [Indiscernible] [0:26:10] and the capabilities and a lot of data exchange which is non-automated and they know the things so if you wouldn't want this I don't think it will smoothen our [Indiscernible] [0:26:21] of perfection.

Interviewer: Have you heard anything from your organization about what their concerns are telling the implementations?

Interviewee: Not yet.

Interviewer: They've been very quiet?

Interviewee: Yeah. It's a US party at the moment.

Interviewer: Okay. Is there anything else you'd like to share with me, about pricing, ESP dynamics in your organization surrounding these topics?

Interviewee: Yes. On the ESP there was a big hurdle in the beginning but now people start to see the value of it and since ESP, we only using that [Indiscernible] [0:26:55] par so there's also things like the quoting of pricing that's been added because there was a functionality that's used now. And another thing they're thinking of is there're also re-based [Indiscernible] [0:27:11] and ESP portable and these faults are too used as [Indiscernible] [0:27:15] in as allow for ESP to be implemented to [Indiscernible] [0:27:20]. So there're more [Indiscernible] [0:27:22] abilities, that we use at the moment so, but having said that meeting if we started more on more of the content of ESP [Indiscernible] [0:27:33] I think it's part of the [Indiscernible] [0:27:35] the acceptance and nothing has been accepted till that [Indiscernible] [0:27:37] and good level.

Interviewer: Okay. And do you anticipate the audit that's going on now to come back with any points about pricing?

Interviewee: Yes because my ultimate goal is that no prices will be entered manually into the ERP system and I know that's not the case at the moment but I'm waiting for the state to [Indiscernible] [0:28:01]

Interviewer: Okay. Okay those were my questions.

Interviewee: Okay.

Interviewer: Thank you for your time.

Interviewee: You're welcome.

[RECORDING STOPPED] [0:28:16]

## **Appendix 5 – Mock Dialogue between Roles**

### **Mock Dialogue between my 3 Roles**

I shall now reflect upon my experience of conducting research in my own firm while participating in the phenomenon being studied. To do this I will simulate a dialogue that could have taken place between my 3 different roles; Demand Manager, Pricing Manager and Researcher as they reflect upon their experiences at the company Case Co.

Demand Manager: "Tell me about your experience as the Pricing Manager at Case Co."

Pricing Manager: "In my role as the Pricing Manager at Case Co I performed the following tasks; I coordinated the Annual Price Adjustment Process, made revisions to the Pricing Policy and implemented the ESP system. I then acted as the ESP System Administrator, serving as the user help desk and maintaining the system by updating approval rules and routings as necessary. "

Demand Manager: "I have heard that the ESP system works pretty well, people are using it and its automated the approval process for entering special prices into the PRSIM system. People seem positive about it."

Pricing Manager: "yes, NOW people seem to be positive about the tool, however during the implementation, it was an entirely different story. While there was the normal resistance to the process, there was one particular event where the product managers ganged up and sent an e-mail to their managers trying to delay the implementation, a week before we were scheduled to go live. They didn't include me or my boss on the e-mail, rather they sent it from only 4 of them with their bosses and the IT manager in the cc. Consequently the IT manager also reported to my boss, which made it even worse."

Demand Manager: "What do you mean, even worse?"

Pricing Manager: "By including this person in the 'secret mail' it meant that he was also in cahoots with them, against his own boss."

Demand Manager: "In cahoots with them? I don't understand what you mean."

Pricing Manager: "They had ganged up, formed an alliance and went behind my back to run to their managers. They were collaborating with each other to try to force the BUMs to stop the implementation. They didn't even have the courtesy to tell me that they had such concerns; rather they just went and sent the e-mail to try and gather more followers to overthrow me and the project. I was informed by one of their BUMs in the hallway on Friday afternoon at 5 pm as I was preparing to leave for the weekend."

Demand Manager: "That doesn't sound like the PMs at all, I've never had such an experience with them. If they are not in agreement with something, they tell me very directly. Sometimes it is not pleasant, but I always know where I stand with them."

Pricing Manager: "I thought I knew where I stood with them too, until that day. Since then I don't trust them anymore. I always feel like they are telling me what I want to hear to my face and saying something else behind my back. If I were you I would be careful, maybe you don't know where you stand with them. Maybe they are only using you to get their way, promote one of their agendas which you don't know about."

Demand Manager: "Now now, that's an awfully negative thing to say. It sounds like you are suspicious and paranoid. They are only people, your colleagues too, they sit down the hall from us, eat lunch with us and sometimes we have a drink or dinner together. It can't be all that bad."

Pricing Manager: "Unfortunately I cannot forget how it felt to read that e-mail which they didn't even have the courtesy to tell me about to my face. Rather, it was only after they realized I was aware of it that they came running to me with excuses, telling me that I wasn't copied on it because it wasn't about me. Even though, as the project manager and system administrator, it was. I was the person behind the policy, system and project. It may have been a tool they were arguing against, but I was the person who bore the brunt of their frustrations. And that was painful."

Demand Manager: "Surely now, it wasn't that bad. Nobody yelled at you or used profane words did they?"

Pricing Manager: “No, it wasn’t that kind of aggression; it was more of the passive aggressive sort. Snide remarks about how Nicole made us or sneakily assigning me things to do, well Nicole can take care of that in ESP. And people complained about the ESP tool endlessly in my presence. At least that is how it felt. I felt like I only ever heard complaints about something I couldn’t change.”

Researcher: “Sorry about the delay, is it okay if I join in the conversation?”

Demand Manager: “Of course, I don’t see any issue with that. Do you Pricing Manager?”

Pricing Manger: “No, not at all, you are welcome to join in. I was just reflecting about my experience of implementing the ESP system and how the people in the company responded to me. I was telling the Demand Manager here that I felt like people in the organization were conspiring against me when I was executing the implementation and how that affected the way I viewed them afterwards, ie., how I no longer trusted the product managers in particular after they had gone behind my back to try and delay the go-live. “

Researcher: “Ouch, that doesn’t sound very pleasant. But, did they really go behind your back or was it the back of the project? These are two different things of course. “

Pricing Manger: “I don’t understand what you mean. I was the project manager, the person making everything happen. Thus, I was the project, without me there would not have been a project. So, they went behind my back, stabbed me in the back rather.”

Demand Manager: “Come on now, that is a bit melodramatic don’t you think? I also work with these people and while I have encountered some resistance from them time to time, I can’t imagine them behaving in an intentional malicious way. Don’t you think you are taking this all a bit too personally? Maybe they were afraid to come to you and express their concerns?”

Researcher: “Now that is an interesting perspective, why would you say that they are afraid of the Pricing Manager?”

Demand Manger: “Simple, she’s viewed as a tough woman who has the ear of management. She’s American, just like the top management, has proven herself in bigger companies and is not afraid to make decisions. While these traits may be viewed as admirable, they could also be intimidating. She also has her own big office and does have a habit of keeping to her herself. When she’s working on something, she closes the door and when people come in asks them, ‘what can I do for you?’ Whether or not its intended, this could make people feel like they are interrupting her, like she’s too important to talk to them.

Pricing Manger: “I do not make people feel that way do I? I know that I find it difficult to engage with colleagues in the relaxed social way things are done here, but I don’t intimidate people. I just get the job done, that’s it. When I need to concentrate I close the door to drown out the outside noise and, well, yes, to discourage people from coming in. I guess that one maybe doesn’t endear me to people all of the time. But, I’m not here for a social party, I’m here to do my job. Aren’t we all?”

Demand Manger: “Yes, but take a look around you, the social network here is a very strong element in how things get done in this company. Friends are also colleagues and vice versa. I know this is not what you are used to, but maybe if you made more of an effort to engage in that way...”

Pricing Manager: “I don’t disagree with you, but I don’t have the time nor the energy for that. Not to mention, I don’t find that to be professional. Don’t forget, I am someone who aspires to reach executive management, which means that I need to take a birds eye view of the organization and not get too associated with people who might be viewed as problems or trouble makers.”

Researcher: “Okay, now I’m getting confused here. How is it possible for the two of you to have such differing views of the same people and organization? I’ve also engaged with these people and I wouldn’t describe them as trouble makers. They are very vocal about the things that they perceive as problems or issues, but trouble makers?”

Pricing Manager: “The PMs have an opinion or a recommendation about everything. They believe they know how the organization can be best run and

whether or not they realize that, they do not have enough perspective to make those kinds of assessments. These are a bunch of chemists who are involved in business activities. While they have an idea of what happens in this company, most of them have never worked anywhere else. They don't have any idea how other companies function or organize themselves. They view this place as a sort of family, and that brings a lot of emotion into the workplace which doesn't belong there."

Demand manager: "Hold on now, you are accusing people of having too much emotion in the workplace and then you are over there whining about how the same people ganged up and stabbed you in the back. Who is the emotional one now?"

Pricing Manager: "Okay okay, maybe that is a fair assessment. But, you need to realize, I am a product of my environment. I'm someone who is very sensitive to the atmosphere around me and ..."

Researcher: "Sorry to interrupt, but do you think that maybe that has clouded your view of what happened here? That maybe your recollection of the events which occurred has been overshadowed by this influence of the external environment and your own emotional response to it?"

Pricing Manager: "I would be remiss if I answered no. That is of course entirely possible, and plausible. However, when examining the evidence, the events themselves cannot be ignored. The PMs did try to stage a rebellion against the project which I was responsible for, without informing me. That is a fact. My boss forced the project upon the organization based upon external factors, the audit problems, which he has been very clear about, so that is also a fact. Thus, regardless of my own response, those events did occur.

Researcher: "True, but what I am getting at is whether or not your behavior towards the group of individuals after the incident you are describing. Did the way you interact with them change as a result of the emotions which you felt?"

Pricing Manager: "Yes, if I am honest, yes, it did. I began to slowly disengage myself from the group and when possible would isolate myself. That was the time when I began closing my door more often, engaging less with them in



social activities and sitting together at lunch. I no longer trusted that group of people and while I did my best not to show it, I did begin to behave differently. I invested more energy in earning recognition from management and less energy in trying to win their approval. I knew that if I had the backing of management, I could push anything through the organization. In a way I guess I didn't care what they thought anymore, or so I tried to tell myself."

Demand Manager: "That is what I was talking about earlier. It is very possible that people noticed this, that they felt the change in you. I also noticed a change in you as the project wore on. Your patience became reduced, you were more sensitive to criticisms about the tool and you even began to look different. You were always someone who had taken pride in your appearance and after the events which you described; you looked sad and didn't dress as sharp as before. As the months went by you took on a grayish appearance and in all honesty, you looked very unhappy."

Pricing Manager: "Really, you noticed all of that? Yes, I was very unhappy actually, I hated coming into work every day. I dreaded having to see my colleagues because I didn't trust them anymore. While I had a few friends and consistent support from my boss, I was always on guard against another attack. While my role as the pricing manager was one which was requested by the organization, I was not fulfilling it in the way they wanted things to be done. Thus, while I was meeting management's expectations, I was not meeting those of my own peers. That was very difficult and yes, it did have an effect on me."

Demand Manager: "These feelings you describe, they also began to affect me as well you know. Your negative, if I may call it that, perspective about the organization began to rub off on me as well. While I never experienced the events which you described, your sadness and would I could call paranoia about the organization began to spread into my realm as well. I started not wanting to engage with the PMs in particular about the forecast because I was nervous that they would begin to look for problems with it the same way they were attacking pricing. I began to wonder if they were really committed to the process of if it was just for show. While I was not treated in the same way as you, your response to the events also influenced my perception of the

organization; I began to wonder if and when they would seek me out as the next focus for attack.

Researcher: "It's ironic that you mention that because I was also influenced by the negative feelings of the Pricing Manager. Because this research project is directly linked to her role, for a time it became impossible for me to disconnect the researcher from the Pricing Manager. I actually despised the study for a period of time because the day to day environment was so negative that I had no desire to pursue the study in my private time. For me the saving grace was when the Pricing Manager decided to leave the company, this is what allowed me to proceed with the investigation without her influence."

Demand Manager: "That decision for me was also a turning point. I had also become disenfranchised with the demand management activities, not because of the commercial organization but because of the challenges in dealing with the operations side of the business. I no longer enjoyed forecasting and saw it as a tedious chore which needed to be done each month. The pleasure that I had experienced in working with the commercial organization had been tainted by the experiences of the Pricing Manager during the ESP implementation, so there was no longer a positive balance. Thus, when she chooses to leave to organization, I left with her. My choice was for different reasons, but nevertheless, it was also with a sense of relief that I left."

Pricing Manager: "My decision to leave the firm was for two reasons; firstly I found it challenging to go to work each day because of the feelings of betrayal and distrust. I have never experienced that in my career before and never since. And secondly, I recognized the influence my feelings were having on the role of the researcher. Her project was more important in my eyes than the role I was playing in the firm, and I needed to create distance to allow her to have the freedom to perform her role. My feelings were putting her ability to perform in jeopardy, and I was the only one who could resolve that issue. So, I left the firm, and joined another organization performing a completely different role."

Researcher: "This is very interesting for me to hear as I can also recognize how the feelings described by the Demand Manager and Pricing Manager affected me. Around the same time they were deciding to leave the firm I was struggling

with the decision to continue with the research project or not. The negative feelings the Pricing Manager had about the firm were also influencing my feeling about the research project. I found it difficult to detach myself from the daily activities of the firm and view the project from a conceptual level. I was debating about whether or not I should continue with the project. For me it was a relief when the Pricing Manager made the decision to leave the firm. This allowed me to engage with the organization members in an objective way removing any influence from the Pricing Manager, Demand Manager and their relationships with the organization.”

Pricing Manager: “So, me leaving the company was a good thing for you, and your research?”

Researcher: “Yes, it provided me and the company the possibility to interact with each other without any external influencing factors. It also allowed me the distance I needed to approach the project from an objective perspective and explore the larger concepts at play.”

